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New York

President: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m.

Statement by the President

The President: I would like to welcome the heads of State and Government, as well as other heads of delegation, who have assembled here for the general debate at this important and challenging time. I am particularly heartened by such high-level participation from all Member States despite the rescheduling of the general debate. Let me also express my gratitude for the special arrangements that our host country, the United States of America, and the host city, New York, have made to ensure the maximum convenience and security of all participants.

The heinous terrorist attacks of 11 September were an unspeakable tragedy not just for the United States, but for the entire international community. They deeply affected the work of the United Nations, forcing us to postpone and reschedule various events, including the start of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. The general debate has had to be postponed for seven weeks and the special session on children for an even longer period. Thus, the opening of the general debate today carries with it both a special meaning and a renewed sense of responsibility.

The actions of the United Nations in the past two months give proof of our united response to the challenge. Beginning with the unanimous resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 12 September and the two important resolutions of the Security Council, we have moved quickly and decisively to address the overriding issue of terrorism. Also, progress has been made by the Sixth Committee towards finalizing a comprehensive convention on terrorism. Taking this opportunity, I would like to appeal to all Member States to further strengthen cooperation for an early conclusion of the convention.

But our work has by no means been limited to the issue of terrorism. In view of the time constraints imposed after 11 September, the Member States have acted with increased harmony and expeditiousness to deal with wide-ranging issues of global concern. I congratulate the delegations on what they have achieved thus far and urge them to carry on in the same spirit.

For the United Nations, the last two months were also marked by a uniquely reassuring and encouraging development. We were all delighted and honoured to learn that the Nobel Peace Prize for 2001 had been awarded to the United Nations as such, jointly with its Secretary-General Kofi Annan. I believe that the award should be seen as both a recognition of past achievements and a summons to even greater efforts in the future. It is this heavy responsibility that will be uppermost in my mind when I travel to Oslo in December, along with our Secretary-General, to accept the Prize on behalf of the United Nations.

The issues that we are going to address during the next week in this Hall bear a heightened importance and urgency in view of the current international circumstances. Therefore, I would like to solicit the full cooperation of all participants to ensure a

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productive outcome worthy of our high expectations and of the ideals for which the United Nations stands.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

Statement by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General: Let me welcome all who have come to New York for this general debate, and especially the President of our host country.

We meet nearly seven weeks later than we had intended — and we all know why.

No words can express our revulsion and sorrow at the senseless loss of life on 11 September. We share in the pain and grief of our host country and host city. Like them, we are determined to overcome the forces that inflicted this ordeal upon us. The United Nations is indeed "the indispensable common house of the entire human family", as our heads of State and Government declared last year, and seldom has the need for it been more widely understood. When a family is under attack, it is in their common house that its members gather to decide what to do.

From the very day after the tragedy, while Members took action in their own countries and regions, their representatives here have been at work — first expressing their condemnation and resolve, then working out in detail how the world can protect itself. The United Nations has also been straining every nerve to bring relief to the suffering people of Afghanistan and to help them reach agreement on a broad-based Government.

One is tempted to say that we must now focus all our energies on the struggle against terrorism and on directly related issues. Yet, if we did so we should give the terrorists a kind of victory.

Let us remember that none of the issues that faced us on 10 September has become less urgent. The number of people living on less than one dollar a day has not decreased. The numbers dying of AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other preventable diseases have not decreased. The factors that cause the desert to advance, biodiversity to be lost and the Earth's atmosphere to warm have not decreased. And, in the many parts of the world afflicted by the scourge of war, innocent people have not ceased being murdered or mutilated, dragged or driven from their homes.

In short, my friends, the agenda of pea development and human rights set for us in Millennium Declaration is no less pressing. anything, it has taken on new urgency. Seldom have danger of division within the human family, and need to resist that danger, been more clea understood.

We face two possible futures: a mutua destructive clash between so-called civilizations ba on the exaggeration of religious and cultu differences, or a global community, respect diversity and rooted in universal values. The la must be our choice, but we can achieve it only if bring real hope to the billions now trapped in pove conflict and disease. That is why the current meeting the World Trade Organization is so important. Ne was agreement among nations rich and poor on rules of the international trading system so vita needed.

But even more decisive will be the use t Member States make of this Organization in the ye ahead. Let me recall some fundamental principles which I believe all our work must be guided.

First, the United Nations must always stand the rule of law in international and domestic affairs.

Secondly, we must cherish our multilate institutions and procedures and use them to full effec

Thirdly, the United Nations must place people the centre of everything it does, enabling them to m their needs and realize their full potential. That can achieved only in a world of effective, accountab States which use sovereignty as a means to ensure t security of their peoples and to uphold, not viola their rights.

Fourthly, all the actors of the international syste must work together in pursuit of common goals. T United Nations should concentrate on those are where it has comparative advantage. Where others ha greater expertise and resources, it must seek to ensu that they apply them to the common needs of humani In other words, it must reach out to the widest possib range of partners.

Finally, what the United Nations does, it must well. We must continue improving our ability to gi our Members the service they expect, and to fulfil t priorities that Members have identified.

Let me now mention four burning issues on which our performance will be decisive.

First is the eradication of extreme poverty. In the Millennium Declaration, heads of State and Government resolved to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world's population whose income is less than $1 a day, who suffer from hunger and who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water. Achieving this objective is a shared responsibility. Much must be done by the developing countries. But, to reach the point where they can really benefit from market opportunities, they need generous help from the developed countries. I will do my utmost to ensure that this fundamental issue is addressed.

Secondly, I shall intensify my commitment to the struggle against HIV/AIDS — the spread of which our heads of State and Government pledged to halt, and begin to reverse, by 2015. To have any hope of redeeming that pledge, we must all make it a genuine priority for years to come.

Thirdly, I shall maintain and strengthen the focus of our work on preventing deadly conflict. We must not wait passively for crises to erupt, but tackle the root causes of political violence.

We need systems of governance that promote free expression and social justice, while protecting civil liberties and minority rights. We must attack the gross inequality of opportunity, which so deeply divides people in different parts of the world — and sometimes different parts of a single country.

Fourthly, I take very seriously the pledge made in the Millennium Declaration to spare

> "our children and grandchildren ... from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs." (*resolution 55/2, para. 21*)

We must put the issue of sustainability where it belongs, in the centre of the policymaking process.

The common thread connecting all these issues is the need to respect fundamental human rights; and Africa is the region where all of them present the greatest challenge. I am determined to integrate human rights even more fully into every aspect of our work. And, taking my cue from the Millennium Declaration, I intend to ensure that the United Nations fully supports the priorities established by the African leaders in the New Partnership for African Development.

Inevitably, we shall be dealing with all these issues over the next five years, day in and day out. But there are two events next year that I want especially to bring to the Assembly's attention: the Conference on Financing for Development in March, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September.

Those meetings, if properly prepared and managed, can mark a real turning point in our struggle to eradicate poverty and achieve genuinely sustainable development. I shall do everything in my power to ensure their success. Let me entreat all of you to do the same.

Now let me turn to the last of my fundamental principles: the principle that what this Organization does, it must do well.

During my first term I have worked with Members to improve the efficiency and coordination of the Secretariat, and to bring greater coherence to the United Nations family.

Have we achieved something? Yes, we have. Our Organization is better and more effective than it was five years ago. Its financial situation has at last improved — thanks to full payment of dues by many Member States, and significant arrearage payments from a few. In future, let us keep it on a firm financial footing.

But have we yet succeeded in giving the world's peoples the effective instrument they need? No, we have not. We need to sit together and think afresh about the way we work, and whether our system is adequate for its tasks.

For instance, are we really devoting our resources and energies to the priorities Members have given us? How can the contributions of civil society — including the private sector — be better organized? How can the United Nations function more effectively as a single entity, in each country where it works? And how can we ensure not only that we attract the best possible staff, but that staff at all levels are encouraged to think and act creatively?

This may seem a prosaic note to end on. But the world's people will judge us by our ability to perform specific tasks: not by the resounding speeches we make, or the number of decisions we reach, but by the

quality of those decisions, and of the service we provide.

For the sake of all those whom we hope to save — whether from terrorism, from war, from poverty, from disease or from environmental degradation — let us resolve that only the best is good enough. And let us equip ourselves so that, in future, the best is what we give.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Before we hear the next speaker, I should once again to like to appeal to Member States to limit their statements to 15 minutes so that all the speakers inscribed for each meeting of the seven-day period of the general debate can be accommodated at that meeting.

Address by Mr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil

The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Mr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Cardoso *(spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation)*: I greet you, Mr. President, and pay tribute to the Republic of Korea, which offers the world an example of dedication to the cause of peace and development.

I reaffirm my admiration for Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who, together with the United Nations, was rightfully honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize. More than ever, we need his clear vision and courage in seeking to build a peaceful and democratic international order that is based on solidarity. Only fanatics fail to acknowledge the great mission undertaken by the United Nations and by Kofi Annan.

In a tradition that extends back to the beginnings of this Organization, the month of September in New York is dedicated to a celebration of dialogue: the opening of the general debate of this General Assembly. It was not so this year. In New York as well as in Washington, the month of September was marked by the very denial of this dialogue and understanding between peoples: the senseless violence resulting from an odious and treacherous attack against the United States of America and against all peace- and freedom-loving peoples.

It was an infamous act of aggression against a city that, perhaps more than any other, is a symbol of cosmopolitanism; a city that has welcomed immigrants from all parts, such as the Dutch Jews of Portuguese ancestry who, in the seventeenth century, left Brazil for what was then New Amsterdam.

New York has grown, prospered and reached maturity guided by pluralistic values. It became great, and was admired, not only because of its Jewish and Anglo-Saxon heritage, but also because of its Arab, Latin, African, Caribbean and Asian presence. The attacks of 11 September 2001 were an act of aggression against all of those traditions — an act of aggression against humanity.

As the first head of State to speak in the general debate at this session of the General Assembly, I wish to be very clear. As I had occasion to say on the very morning of those horrendous attacks, and as I have said during my conversations with President George W. Bush, Brazil extends its full solidarity and support to the people of the United States in its response to terrorism.

To our understanding, the American hemisphere as a whole was attacked. That is why we suggested convening the consultative organ of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. Terrorism negates all that the United Nations stands for. It destroys the very principles of civilized behaviour. It fosters fear, and threatens the security and peace of all countries.

The victims of any act of terrorism will not be forgotten; nor will the perpetrators of such acts go unpunished, whether they are individuals, groups or the States that give them support. The march of folly will be vigorously resisted by the solid alliance of all free peoples.

The Charter of the United Nations acknowledges the right of Member States to act in self-defence. That is not in doubt. But let us keep in mind that the struggle against terrorism cannot rely exclusively on the

effectiveness of self-defence measures or on the use of military force by individual countries.

In 1945, the United Nations committed itself to the task of laying the foundations for peace and the protection of future generations against the scourge of war. War always takes a heavy human toll — a cost in lives cut short and lives overtaken by fear and flight. That underscores the responsibility of terrorists for what is happening today. Brazil hopes that, notwithstanding these circumstances, humanitarian assistance efforts in Afghanistan will not be frustrated. Furthermore, we will, to the best of our abilities, welcome refugees wishing to settle in our country.

Certain things may be obvious, but they warrant repeating. As Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, the struggle against terrorism is not, and must never become, a clash between civilizations, much less between religions. Not one of the civilizations that have enriched and humanized our planet has not known, within its own historical experience, episodes of violence and terror.

Around the world, problems related to crime, drug abuse, drug-trafficking and money-laundering are evils related to terrorism that must be eradicated. From this rostrum, I would like to call for a worldwide public awareness campaign to make drug users in all countries realize that they are helping — even if inadvertently — to finance terrorism.

If we are to stem the flow of resources to the terrorist networks spreading death and destruction, it is crucial that drug use in our societies be drastically curtailed. Furthermore, we must not allow differences in national tax regimes in various countries to be used as an instrument to foster capital flight, to the detriment of economic development, or to help finance organized crime, including terrorist actions. If the existence of tax havens is inseparable from these problems, then tax havens should not exist. We must put an end to such safe harbours for corruption and terror, with regard to which some Governments have, to date, been complacent.

It is only natural that, since 11 September, issues of international security should have been given high priority. Yet terrorism must not be allowed to stifle the debate on cooperation and other issues of global interest. The road to the future requires the forces of globalization to be harnessed in the pursuit of lasting peace — a peace sustained not by fear, but rather by the willing acceptance by all countries of a just international order.

On this theme, I have sought to mobilize numerous world leaders. Brazil wishes to do its part to ensure that the world does not squander the opportunities that are contained in the present crisis. Let us focus on our fundamental imperative of promoting development. The process of globalization is tainted by an undeniable sense of unease. I am not referring to the ideological disquiet of those who oppose globalization on principle or who reject the very notion of universal values which inspire freedom and the respect for human rights. Rather, I have in mind the fact that globalization has not lived up to its promises. There is a governance deficit in the international sphere, and it results from a democratic deficit. Globalization will be sustainable only if enriched by a sense of justice. Our aim should be "globalization in solidarity", rather than the asymmetrical globalization of today.

In the field of trade, it is high time that multilateral negotiations were translated into greater access for goods from developing countries to the more prosperous markets. The ministers meeting in Doha have a heavy responsibility: to ensure that the new round of multilateral trade negotiations is a development round. To this end, it is crucial for priority to be given to those issues most conducive to the dismantling of protectionist practices and barriers in developed countries.

Brazil has taken the lead in negotiations to ensure greater market access and better humanitarian conditions in the fight against disease. We will seek to strike a balance between the requirements of patent rights and the imperative of providing care to those most in need. We favour market practices and the protection of intellectual property, but not at the cost of human lives. This is a point that must be carefully defined: life must prevail over material interests.

The Bretton Woods institutions must be revamped if they are to respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century. The International Monetary Fund must be allotted greater resources so as to allow it to function as a lender of last resort. The World Bank and regional banks must be given a more active part in fostering economic growth and development.

The volatility of international capital flows must be contained and the financial system made more

predictable and less crisis-prone, as proposed by the G-20.

Similarly, although measures such as the Tobin tax present practical difficulties, it should be possible to look into better and less compulsory alternatives. I submit that these issues should be given special attention at the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held next year in Monterrey.

We must also envisage practical forms of cooperation to alleviate the tragedy of AIDS, above all in Africa. How long will the world remain indifferent to the plight of those who might yet be saved from disease, deprivation and exclusion?

The twentieth century came to an end amid a growing sense of global citizenship and universally shared values. Brazil is determined to forge ahead in this direction.

The International Criminal Court will be a historic victory for the cause of human rights. The protection of the environment and sustainable development are equally pressing challenges of our time. The process of climate change has been scientifically ascertained as a fact, but it is not unstoppable. What the future holds depends on what we do today, in particular as concerns the Kyoto Protocol.

(*spoke in English*)

I have just been informed of the successful outcome of the Marrakesh meeting. Brazil warmly welcomes this development, which is a fundamental step towards controlling, and eventually reversing, the warming of the atmosphere. I will submit to the Congress a proposal for the prompt ratification of the Kyoto Protocol.

(*spoke in Portuguese*)

Recent events in this city and elsewhere have clearly demonstrated the grave threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. No matter the nature of the menace — be it bacteriological, such as anthrax; chemical; or nuclear — there is no alternative to disarmament and non-proliferation.

It is an ethical imperative that science and technology must not be turned into a weapon in the hands of the irresponsible. This requires the active and legitimate involvement of the United Nations in the control, destruction and eradication of these arsenals.

Just as it supported the creation of the State of Israel, Brazil today calls for concrete measures towards the setting up of a Palestinian state that is democratic, united and economically viable.

The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and respect for the existence of Israel as a sovereign, free and secure State are essential if the Middle East is to rebuild its future in peace.

This is a moral debt owed by the United Nations. It is a task that must not be postponed.

It is equally urgent that a lasting solution be found to the conflict in Angola, which deserves the opportunity to get back on the road to development. This is the same future that Brazil wishes for East Timor, which we hope will soon take its rightful place in the Assembly as a sovereign state.

A strong and flexible United Nations is required if the world is to respond to increasingly complex problems. The United Nations will only be strengthened if the General Assembly becomes more active and more respected, and if the Security Council becomes more representative. Its composition should no longer be a reflection of arrangements among the victors of a conflict that took place over 50 years ago, and for whose triumph Brazilian soldiers gave their blood in the glorious campaigns in Italy.

Brazil joins those who appeal for more democracy in international relations in calling for the enlargement of the Security Council. Common sense requires the inclusion, in the category of permanent members, of those developing countries with the necessary credentials to exercise the responsibilities that today's world imposes upon them.

By the same token, Brazil believes that an enlargement of the G-7/G-8 is called for in view of the transformations the world is presently undergoing. It is no longer admissible to restrict to such a limited group of countries the discussion of issues pertaining to globalization and its inevitable impact on the political and economic life of emerging countries.

An international order that is more just and based on solidarity will come about only through a concerted effort on the part of the community of nations. This is

too precious a goal to be left to the vagaries of market forces or to the whims of power politics.

We do not aspire to a world government, but we cannot sidestep the obligation to ensure that international relations are not left rudderless, but reflect the legitimate aspirations of the majority. The nefarious shadow of terrorism points to what can be expected if we do not enhance mutual understanding among peoples.

This Organization was created under the sign of dialogue — a dialogue among sovereign States that are free nations, whose peoples actively participate in national decision-making.

With their help, we can ensure that the twenty-first century will not be a time of fear, but rather of the flourishing of a freer humanity, at peace with itself, and rationally oriented towards the building of an international order that is acceptable to all peoples and that provides a guiding framework for States at the global level.

This is the challenge of the twenty-first century. Let us face it inspired by the grand vision of the founding fathers of this Organization, who dreamed of a pluralistic world, founded on peace, solidarity, tolerance and reason, which is the ultimate source of the rule of law.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United States of America.

Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Bush: We meet in a Hall devoted to peace; in a city scarred by violence; in a nation awakened to danger; in a world uniting for a long struggle. Every civilized nation here today is resolved to keep the most basic commitment of civilization. We will defend ourselves and our future against terror and lawless violence.

The United Nations was founded in this cause. In the Second World War, we learned that there is no isolation from evil. We affirmed that some crimes are so terrible they offend humanity itself, and we resolved that the aggressions and ambitions of the wicked must be opposed early, decisively and collectively, before they threaten us all.

That evil has returned, and that cause is renewed. A few miles from here, many thousands still lie in a tomb of rubble. Tomorrow, the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and I will visit that site, where the names of every nation and region that lost citizens will be read aloud. If we were to read out the names of every person who died, it would take more than three hours.

Those names include a citizen of the Gambia, whose wife spent their fourth wedding anniversary, 12 September, searching in vain for her husband. Those names include a man who supported his wife in Mexico, sending home money every week. Those names include a young Pakistani who prayed towards Mecca five times a day and who died that day trying to save others.

The suffering of 11 September was inflicted on people of many faiths and many nations. All of the victims, including Muslims, were killed with equal indifference and equal satisfaction by the terrorist leaders.

The terrorists are violating the tenets of every religion, including the one they invoke. Last week, the sheikh of Al-Azhar University, the world's oldest Islamic institution of higher learning, declared that terrorism is a disease and that Islam prohibits killing innocent civilians. The terrorists call their cause holy, yet they fund it with drug dealing. They encourage murder and suicide in the name of a great faith that forbids both. They dare to ask God's blessing as they set out to kill innocent men, women and children. But

the God of Isaac and Ishmael would never answer such a prayer. And a murderer is not a martyr; he is just a murderer.

Time is passing. Yet for the United States of America, there will be no forgetting 11 September. We will remember every rescuer who died in honour. We will remember every family that lives in grief. We will remember the fire and ash, the last phone calls, the funerals of the children.

And the people of my country will remember those who have plotted against us. We are learning their names. We are coming to know their faces. There is no corner of the Earth distant or dark enough to protect them. However long it takes, their hour of justice will come.

Every nation has a stake in this cause. As we meet, the terrorists are planning more murder — perhaps in my country, or perhaps, fellow members, in yours. They kill because they aspire to dominate. They seek to overthrow Governments and to destabilize entire regions. Last week, anticipating this meeting of the General Assembly, they denounced the United Nations; they called our Secretary-General a criminal and they condemned all Arab nations here as traitors to Islam. Few countries meet their exacting standards of brutality and oppression. Every other country is a potential target.

And all the world faces the most horrifying prospect of all: those same terrorists are searching for weapons of mass destruction, the tools to turn their hatred into holocaust. They can be expected to use chemical, biological and nuclear weapons the moment they are capable of doing so. No hint of conscience would prevent it. That threat cannot be ignored; that threat cannot be appeased. Civilization itself — the civilization we share — is threatened. History will record our response and will judge or justify every nation in this Hall.

The civilized world is now responding. We act to defend ourselves and to deliver our children from a future of fear. We choose the dignity of life over a culture of death. We choose lawful change and civil disagreement over coercion, subversion and chaos. Those commitments — hope and order, law and life — unite people across cultures and continents. Upon those commitments depend all peace and progress. For those commitments, we are determined to fight.

The United Nations has risen to this responsibility: on 12 September, these buildings opened for emergency meetings of the General Assembly and of the Security Council. Before the sun had set, these attacks on the world stood condemned by the world, and I want to thank you, fellow members, for that strong and principled stand.

I also thank the Arab and Islamic countries that have condemned terrorist murder. Many of you have seen the destruction of terror in your own lands. The terrorists are increasingly isolated by their own hatred and extremism. They cannot hide behind Islam. The authors of mass murder and their allies have no place in any culture, and no home in any faith.

The conspiracies of terror are being answered by an expanding global coalition. Not every nation will be part of every action against the enemy. But every nation in our coalition has duties. Those duties can be demanding, as we in America are learning. We have already made adjustments in our laws and in our daily lives. We are taking new measures to investigate terror and to protect against threats.

The leaders of all nations must now carefully consider their responsibilities and their future. Terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda depend upon the aid or indifference of Governments. They need the support of a financial infrastructure and safe havens to train and plan and hide.

Some nations want to play their part in the fight against terror but tell us they lack the means to enforce their laws and control their borders. We stand ready to help.

Some Governments still turn a blind eye to the terrorists, hoping the threat will pass them by. They are mistaken.

And some Governments, while pledging to uphold the principles of the United Nations, have cast their lot with the terrorists. They support them and harbour them. And they will find that their welcomed guests are parasites that will weaken them and eventually consume them. For every regime that sponsors terror there is a price to be paid, and it will be paid. The allies of terror are equally guilty of murder and equally accountable to justice.

The Taliban are now learning that lesson. That regime and the terrorists who support it are now virtually indistinguishable. Together they promote

terror abroad and impose a reign of terror on the Afghan people. Women are executed in Kabul's soccer stadium. They can be beaten for wearing socks that are too thin. Men are jailed for missing prayer meetings.

The United States, supported by many nations, is bringing justice to the terrorists in Afghanistan. We are making progress against military targets — and that is our objective. Unlike the enemy, we seek to minimize, not maximize, the loss of innocent life. I am proud of the honourable conduct of the American military. And my country grieves for all the suffering the Taliban have brought upon Afghanistan, including the terrible burden of war.

The Afghan people do not deserve their present rulers. Years of Taliban misrule have brought nothing but misery and starvation. Even before this current crisis, 4 million Afghans depended on food from the United States and other nations, and millions of Afghans were refugees from Taliban oppression.

I make this promise to all the victims of that regime: the Taliban's days of harbouring terrorists, and dealing in heroin, and brutalizing women are drawing to a close. When that regime is gone, the people of Afghanistan will say, with the rest of the world, good riddance.

I can promise, too, that America will join the world in helping the people of Afghanistan rebuild their country.

Many nations, including mine, are sending food and medicine to help Afghans through the winter. America has airdropped over 1.3 million packages of rations in Afghanistan. Just this week, we airlifted 20,000 blankets and over 200 tons of provisions into the region. We continue to provide humanitarian aid, even while the Taliban try to steal the food we send.

More help, eventually, will be needed. The United States will work closely with the United Nations and development banks to reconstruct Afghanistan after hostilities there have ceased and the Taliban are no longer in control. And the United States will work with the United Nations to support a post-Taliban Government that represents all of the Afghan people.

In this war of terror, each of us must answer for what we have done or what we have left undone. After tragedy, there is a time for sympathy and condolence. My country has been very grateful for both.

The memorials and vigils around the world will not be forgotten. But the time for sympathy has now passed. The time for action has now arrived.

The most basic obligations in this new conflict have already been defined by the United Nations. On 28 September, the Security Council adopted resolution 1373 (2001). Its requirements are clear: every United Nations Member has a responsibility to crack down on terrorist financing. We must pass all necessary laws in our own countries to allow the confiscation of terrorist assets. We must apply those laws to every financial institution in every nation.

We have a responsibility to share intelligence and coordinate the efforts of law enforcement. If you know something, tell us. If we know something, we will tell you. And when we find the terrorists, we must work together to bring them to justice.

We have a responsibility to deny any sanctuary, safe haven, or transit to terrorists. Every known terrorist camp must be shut down, its operators apprehended, and evidence of their arrest presented to the United Nations.

We have a responsibility to deny weapons to terrorists — and to actively prevent private citizens from providing them.

These obligations are urgent, and they are binding on every nation with a place in this Hall. Many Governments are taking these obligations seriously, and my country appreciates it. Yet even beyond resolution 1373 (2001), more is required — and more is expected — of our coalition against terror. We are asking for a comprehensive commitment to this fight.

We must unite in opposing all terrorists, not just some of them. In this world, there are good causes and bad causes, and we may disagree on where that line is drawn. Yet there is no such thing as a good terrorist. No national aspiration, no remembered wrong, can ever justify the deliberate murder of the innocent. Any Government that rejects this principle — trying to pick and choose its terrorist friends — will know the consequences.

We must speak the truth about terror. Let us never tolerate outrageous conspiracy theories concerning the attacks of 11 September — malicious lies that attempt to shift the blame away from the terrorists themselves, away from the guilty. To inflame ethnic hatred is to advance the cause of terror.

The war against terror must not serve as an excuse to persecute ethnic and religious minorities in any country. Innocent people must be allowed to live their own lives, by their own customs, under their own religion. And every nation must have avenues for the peaceful expression of opinion and dissent. When these avenues are closed, the temptation to speak through violence grows.

We must press on with our agenda for peace and prosperity in every land. My country is pledged to encouraging development and expanding trade. My country is pledged to investing in education and combating AIDS and other infectious diseases around the world. Following 11 September, these pledges are even more important. In our struggle against hateful groups that exploit poverty and despair, we must offer an alternative of opportunity and hope.

The American Government also stands by its commitment to a just peace in the Middle East. We are working towards a day when two States — Israel and Palestine — live peacefully together, within secure and recognized borders, as called for by the Security Council resolutions. We will do all in our power to bring both parties back into negotiations. But peace will come only when all have sworn off — forever — incitement, violence and terror.

Finally, this struggle is a defining moment for the United Nations itself — and the world needs its principled leadership. It undermines the credibility of this great institution, for example, when the Commission on Human Rights offers seats to some of the world's most persistent violators of human rights. The United Nations depends, above all, on its moral authority — and that authority must be preserved.

The steps I have described will not be easy. For all nations, they will require effort. For some nations, they will require great courage. Yet the cost of inaction is far greater. The only alternative to victory is a nightmare world where every city is a potential killing field.

As I told the American people, freedom and fear are at war. We face enemies that hate not our policies, but our existence — the tolerance of openness and the creative culture that define us. But the outcome of this conflict is certain.

There is a current in history, and it runs towards freedom. Our enemies resent it and dismiss it, but the dreams of mankind are defined by liberty — the natural right to create, and build, and worship, and live in dignity. When men and women are released from oppression and isolation, they find fulfilment and hope, and they leave poverty by the millions. These aspirations are lifting up the peoples of Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, and they can lift up all of the Islamic world. We stand for the permanent hopes of humanity, and those hopes will not be denied.

We are confident, too, that history has an author, who fills time and eternity with his purpose. We know that evil is real, but good will prevail against it. This is the teaching of many faiths. And in that assurance, we gain strength for a long journey.

It is our task — the task of this generation — to provide the response to aggression and terror. We have no other choice, because there is no other peace. We did not ask for this mission, yet there is honour in history's call. We have a chance to write the story of our times — a story of courage defeating cruelty, and light overcoming darkness. This calling is worthy of any life, and worthy of every nation. So let us go forward — confident, determined and unafraid.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United States of America for the statement he has just made.

Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of South Africa.

Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Mbeki: Please accept my congratulations, Mr. President, on your assumption of the stewardship of this important Assembly.

We also wish to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri, for the skilful manner in which he guided the work of the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations.

Allow me also to salute the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, on being elected to a second term and, together with the United Nations, being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2001. This is because of the tireless work of both the Secretary-General and the United Nations to realize the ideal that we all cherish: a world in which all people can live in peace, security, freedom, equality and justice.

As has already been noted and as we all know, this general debate has begun later than usual. The reason for this is that two months ago, the forces of terror struck at this city, New York — the Headquarters of this Organization — and Washington, D.C., the capital city of the United States of America.

It is proper that we take advantage of this occasion once more to convey our condolences and deepest sympathy to the people and the Government of the United States for the immense loss of life and property imposed on them through a callous act of murder. We extend the same sympathy to all other peoples who lost citizens as a result of the colossal outrage of 11 September. We speak here about the terrible tragedy of 11 September on behalf of our Government and the people of South Africa. We speak also on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth.

There can be no doubt but that the peoples of the world have to unite in action to defeat terrorism. There can be no hesitation among any of us in the resolve to work together to ensure that those responsible for the heinous actions of September 11 are brought to justice.

This is so not only because many nations lost their citizens on that terrible day, important as that is. It is so, because terrorism has demonstrated that it has no respect for borders. It has shown in a very graphic, tragic and painful manner, as it did also in Kenya and Tanzania, that our very humanity renders all of us, without exception, potential targets of cold-blooded murder.

Where we might have used the concept of a global village loosely in the past, on 11 September terrorism taught us the abiding lesson that we do indeed belong to a global village. None within this village will be safe unless all the villagers act together to secure and guarantee that safety. All must act to promote the safety and security of one and all, on the basis of a shared responsibility born of a shared danger.

Accordingly, we have no choice but to get together in the village square to agree on the threat that confronts us. Together, in that village square, we have to determine what we do about this commonly defined threat. This is the ineluctable conclusion we must draw from the terrorist attacks of 11 September.

To guarantee world peace and security in the light of the threat posed by terrorism requires that this Organization, the United Nations, must discharge its responsibility to unite the peoples of the world to adopt an international convention against terrorism.

Necessarily, all of us must experience a shared sense of ownership of this convention, precisely because it would not be merely a statement of principles, but a set of injunctions and prescriptions that will be binding on all of us as States. Thus should each one of us be ready to integrate our respective sovereignties within a global human sovereignty, defined and governed by all of us, with none treated as superior or inferior.

The challenge to unite the peoples of the world to fight the common threat of terrorism brings to the fore the need to speed up the transformation of the United Nations so that it is able to respond to the global challenges we face together, in an equitable manner. This means that it needs to be efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of humanity as a whole.

11 September emphasized the point that, even as the democratic system of government is being consolidated throughout the world, even as we all work to sustain the possibility of a serious and meaningful global dialogue, there are some who are prepared to resort to force in pursuit of their goals. Clearly, there must be a response. But what should that response be?

Immediately, it is correct that we must achieve global security cooperation so that the perpetrators of the 11 September acts of terrorism are apprehended and punished. Correctly, the Government of the United States has emphasized that all action that is carried out must be clearly targeted against the terrorists. It has stated that such actions, including military actions, should not degenerate into collective punishment against any people on any grounds whatsoever,

including those of religion, race or ethnicity. Accordingly, it is indeed necessary that humanitarian assistance be extended to the people of Afghanistan. We fully agree with that approach. The United States Government has also said that these actions should be of the shortest duration possible, consistent with the objective that must be achieved. Again, we agree with this without reservation.

The call has gone out that all Governments and countries should contribute whatever they can to ensure that the common efforts to find and punish the terrorists responsible for 11 September are met with their just results. We have responded positively to this call because it is timely, correct and just.

All these are important elements of what has to be done to respond to those who committed the mass murders of 11 September. But they also indicate the way forward as we consider the rules that should guide us as we confront the threat of terrorism over the longer term and beyond the critically important operations and activities focused on the events of 11 September. They put the matter firmly on our common agenda: We must also achieve global cooperation for the speedy resolution of conflict situations everywhere in the world.

In this regard, it is clear that the situation in the Middle East cries out for an urgent and lasting solution. In this context, we might recall the words of the Irish poet, William Butler Yeats, when he said "too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart". The sacrifice of the Palestinian people should not be allowed to drag on any longer. Whatever these long-suffering people might themselves think and feel, it is clear that there are some in the world who will justify their destructive rage by claiming to be front-line fighters for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Beyond this, we must act together to determine the issues that drive people to resort to force and agree on what we should do to eliminate those issues. At the same time, we must make the point patently clear that such determination does not in any way constitute an attempt to justify terrorism. Together, we must take the firm position that no circumstances whatsoever can ever justify resort to terrorism.

The need to realize together the goal of determining the matters that make for peace once again underlines the need for properly representative international institutions to build the necessary global consensus. It would seem obvious that the fundamental source of conflict in the world today is the socio-economic deprivation of billions of people across the globe, coexisting side by side with islands of enormous wealth and prosperity within and among countries. This necessarily breeds a deep sense of injustice, social alienation and despair and a willingness to sacrifice their lives among those who feel they have nothing to lose and everything to gain, regardless of the form of action to which they resort.

As the Durban World Conference concluded, racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance remain a critical part of the practices that serve to alienate billions of people and contribute to mutual antagonisms among human beings. The international community should spare no effort to ensure that this affront to human dignity is totally eradicated.

Last year, we convened in this very Hall in the historic Millennium Summit. Solemnly, and with serious intent, we adopted the Millennium Declaration. The heavy and urgent obligation we now face is to implement the programme of action spelt out in that Declaration. This constitutes and must constitute the decisive front of struggle against terrorism.

Africa, for its part, has developed a New Partnership for Africa's Development, which is a product of the consciousness among the African people that they themselves hold the key to the continent's development, security and stability. Africans across the continent have arrived at the correct determination that human rights, democracy, peace, stability and justice are the fundamental building blocks for a prosperous continent. Concomitantly, African countries are taking measures, jointly and severally, to improve the conditions for much-needed investment, economic renewal and development. Naturally, the United Nations has a pivotal role to play in this regard.

As we meet here, members of the World Trade Organization are engaged in critical negotiations in Doha, Qatar, hopefully to agree to a new equitable trading relationship that is fair and just. It is imperative that there be a non-discriminatory and equitable trading system that promotes sustainable development.

Soon, ministers of health, the World Health Organization and others concerned will be finalizing the details relating to the global health fund to deal

with the major communicable diseases, including malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS.

The International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held next March in Mexico, will cover a range of pertinent issues, such as debt relief, official development assistance and foreign direct investment. As we all know, substantial capital flows into the developing countries are critical in the struggle to defeat poverty and underdevelopment.

All these constitute vital component parts of what must inform the outcome of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in September next year. We are confident that the Summit will reach positive conclusions that will include firm global, regional and national commitments to the elaboration, integration and implementation of economically efficient, socially responsible and environmentally sound development policies.

There is no doubt that our global village has the resources and capacity to meet the needs of all its citizens. What is needed is the collective will of the international community to act decisively to meet this challenge, inspired by a sense of human solidarity. Peace and security for all, freedom and democracy for all, prosperity for all and genuine equality in conditions of diversity must surely be the outcomes towards which the United Nations and all of us must strive. Our actions must affirm the seriousness of our intent.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of South Africa for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar.

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure to address the General Assembly today in my capacity as the Emir of the State of Qatar and as Chairman of the Ninth Summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

It is our duty to make this important session of the General Assembly a session for rebuilding confidence and realizing the aspirations and expectations of our peoples for a world where peace and prosperity prevail.

I take this opportunity to extend to you, Sir, my congratulations on your election to the presidency of this session, and would like to extend my thanks to your predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri. I must also congratulate Mr. Kofi Annan on his re-election as United Nations Secretary-General and on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize along with the United Nations.

We are all aware of the critical and extraordinary circumstances in which this session is being held and of the political situation prevailing in the world in the wake of the events of 11 September. An analysis of these terrible events, which we condemn, prompts us to say that humanity has actually reached a tremendous turning point.

Personally, I believe that the way to offer the greatest peace and serenity to the souls of the victims of that criminal act, the sincerest consolation to their families and the most effective support to the friendly United States of America, where these events took place, is for the international community as a whole not only to confront what happened but also to act decisively to avoid the repetition of such acts.

What happened in New York and Washington is unprecedented and almost beyond our imagination. There may be some strategic planners who see the events as confirming their predictions, but for the rest of us they would have seemed like fiction only a short time ago. Sadly, the events were all too real, and we watched with amazement, horror and sympathy as we realized their full import for the future of humanity.

Dealing with the repercussions of these events should not be a matter of merely punishing those whose guilt in masterminding and carrying out these criminal acts is proved. Inflicting punishment, though imperative, will not, in my opinion, prevent the

repetition of similar or even more terrible acts in the future.

We face an extremely serious situation. We are seeing what could be described as a globalization of terrorism through the evil utilization of the revolution of technology and communications. Thus, we are all involved in an unconventional war for which we are not yet prepared.

As we know, terrorism is neither a temporary phenomenon nor confined to a certain continent, creed, culture or race; it is everywhere, concealed like time bombs in our midst.

We should therefore ask ourselves, what have we done as an international community about this situation? Have we actually faced up to it? What have we done to rebuild confidence among people? What have we done to contain the fear that is demoralizing our citizens? What are we going to do now to stop the economic recession and social anxiety that threaten us all? Furthermore, is this the world we promised at the Millennium Summit a year ago — a world that would be ruled by amity, peace and cooperation?

If anything, we have moved away from these ideals. We now live in a world where liberties are increasingly restricted, where democracy is in retreat and where caution and isolation are replacing freedom and openness.

The State of Qatar, along with all other Islamic countries, has condemned the terrorist acts that took place on 11 September. This stand was explicitly expressed at the emergency meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Ministers for Foreign Affairs held in Doha last month. Our unanimous agreement condemning what happened emanated from the values of our true Islamic religion and its sublime sharia, which is based on tolerance, justice, equality and cooperation among people and forbids the unjust taking of human life. It urges us to rebuild and to propagate peace and tranquillity.

In this connection, I would like to stress that what deepens our conviction and strengthens our stance towards these eternal cultural values is our realization and understanding of the geopolitical importance of the Muslim nation, with its diverse peoples, which makes it a strategic partner in the process of building balanced international relations.

In fact, this is what makes Muslims deplore those who deliberately and desperately try to link Islam with terrorism. Our peoples condemn and reject terrorism as well as all attempts to distort the image of Islam, which is the last of divine faiths, and those who abuse and terrorize its adherents and jeopardize their lives, dignity and interests.

Therefore, it is now necessary to stand resolutely against all forms of harassment against Arab and Muslim communities in any country that take place under the pretext of combating terrorism and the pursuit of terrorists.

We need to have a clear definition of terrorism and distinguish between this phenomenon, which is based on criminal practices and attacks against innocent civilians, and legitimate struggles to throw off the yoke of colonialism and subjugation.

Terrorism has taken root not only because of our inability to tackle the sources of tension in the world's hot spots, but also because we have tolerated for too long those who pursue policies of repression and deny their citizens fundamental liberties and basic human rights. The seeds of terrorism lie in places where pluralism is rejected, corruption is allowed to spread, authority is exploited and political opponents are hounded in the guise of protecting the security of homelands and people. It is neither just nor logical for anyone to claim to improve internal conditions by resorting to oppressive practices or to suspending democracy.

In this context, we feel it is high time to put an urgent end to the tragedy of the Palestinian people at the hands of the Israeli occupation forces. We call on the international community to shoulder its responsibilities in providing the necessary international protection for these people against the unjustified and unacceptable daily aggression to which they are exposed.

That is indispensable if we want to avert an imminent human catastrophe, which would lead only to a further cycle of violence, terrorism and destruction in our region. We urge everyone to support their political leaders when they call for restraint so as to avoid the loss of innocent civilian life and so that the right climate can be created for a just peace to prevail in that troubled region.

In this context, we should like to put on record our support for the positive stance of the President of the United States, George W. Bush, and his Administration, with regard to the establishment of a Palestinian State. We would also like to pay tribute in this respect to friendly European countries and other international bodies concerned with the settlement of the crisis. The ultimate test will be whether they implement measures reflecting the positions that they have taken and move from making statements to taking action.

We must emphasize the need to address the human tragedy of the people of Afghanistan. We believe that it is our duty to provide all possible assistance to those people, most of whom are living under extremely difficult conditions — conditions that further exacerbate their suffering, which was already acute years before the crisis brought about by the events of 11 September.

We therefore appeal to the international community to provide assistance and aid to save the lives of millions of Afghans who are facing a bleak future. There is an urgent and immediate need for relief as the Afghan winter approaches. We urge the Taliban authorities to cooperate fully with relief organizations to ensure that essential food and medicines can reach all of their people. We urge the international community to designate a safe corridor for such supplies before winter sets in.

In addressing these urgent humanitarian concerns, we believe that it is essential to seek a long-term solution of the Afghan problem, as proposed by the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Such a solution would be based simply on maintaining the territorial integrity and Islamic identity of Afghanistan, and forming a government representing all factions of Afghan society, excluding none.

It is the responsibility of the international community to elaborate comprehensive programmes and plans to confront all forms of global challenges. In this respect, we are convinced of the necessity of reforming the United Nations so as to step up the effectiveness of its organs and agencies and to promote its efficiency. Equally, as States Members of the Organization, we are required to shoulder our political responsibilities and honour our financial and moral obligations towards the Organization. In this context, we support the idea of expanding the membership of the Security Council to make it more democratic and more representative of the international community in our contemporary world. We also support the idea of expanding the permanent membership of the Council in order to secure wider international representation. We also support restrictions on the use of the veto on the part of permanent members, regulating the ability to exercise that right within limits established by specific conditions and provisions to be agreed upon by the international Organization.

From this rostrum, I would like to say that the time has come for us to take steps immediately to activate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In implementing it, international organizations should not confine their role to merely recording the violations of its principles. They should move towards a comprehensive, democratic dialogue that consolidates its provisions guaranteeing people's right to participate in governance, expands its scope and makes it more responsive, not just for today's requirements, but also for those of the future.

The State of Qatar is convinced of the importance of — indeed, the necessity for — such a dialogue. As we would be one of those to benefit from the outcome of such a dialogue, we are willing to contribute in many different ways in order to make this a year for democratic dialogue that would truly reflect the principles of the United Nations Charter at the beginning of this millennium.

If approached with conviction and resolve, this endeavour will lead to the interaction of different views, and could help to unify our efforts against current threats and future challenges and dangers. In this way, our cultural distinctions could be turned into a source of strength and wealth, our social disparities could become an element of diversity and contribution, and our political and geographical borders could become points of cooperation, convergence and communication among our peoples and nations. That would provide an opportunity for all of us to live in a world whose inhabitants take pride in their humanity and look forward to a future of prosperity and well-being for their children and grandchildren without any discrimination or distinction.

May the peace and blessings of God be upon the Assembly.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Emir of the State of Qatar for the statement he has just made.

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Vicente Fox, President of the United Mexican States

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United Mexican States.

Mr. Vicente Fox, President of the United Mexican States, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Mr. Vicente Fox, President of the United Mexican States, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Fox (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly. I should also like to extend my congratulations to all the other members of the Bureau. I am sure that your prestige and acknowledged diplomatic skills will contribute to the successful work of the General Assembly at this session.

I should also like to extend sincere congratulations to this Organization and to the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. Mexico welcomes the fact that they were awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize. That is a well-deserved recognition of the dedication and clarity of vision that have marked the work of the Secretary-General. It fills us with hope regarding the efforts that this Organization will have to make in order to meet the international challenges of the twenty-first century.

I am addressing the General Assembly on behalf of the women and men of my country, Mexico — a country that is in the process of a profound transformation, determined to strengthen democracy and development, as well as to take on greater responsibilities in shaping the new international system with a view to fostering the prosperity, peace and security that every inhabitant of the world deserves.

Mexican society is firmly committed to making Mexico a country that contributes positively to the worthiest objectives of human well-being. Aware that there is a diversity of views on ways to achieve this end, Mexico favours dialogue and agreement as benchmarks to guide our endeavours. For Mexico the United Nations is the best example of a global forum where the voices of all men and women can merge into a veritable concert of nations.

This is a Mexico that today renews its full commitment to the United Nations — which not only demands full respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but that is also committed to the development of new, universally observed rules and standards for the regulation of international relations.

This is a Mexico that acts firmly in the defence and protection of human rights and of democracy, at all times and in all places, beginning, of course, within our own territory, promoting full respect for fundamental freedoms on the basis of tolerance, plurality and equity. That is why my Government has initiated formal talks with the various political parties in Mexico in order to create favourable conditions for the promotion of a constitutional reform that will allow Mexico to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which our country signed last year.

My Government has also started a necessary updating of Mexico's international obligations in the field of human rights and international humanitarian law. I have submitted for consideration by the Mexican Senate the ratification, accession or acceptance of 11 other legal instruments in areas such as the forcible disappearance of persons, the rights of the child, the elimination of discrimination against women and the protection of victims of international armed conflicts.

This new commitment on the part of Mexico to the defence of human rights was also reflected in the recent release, for humanitarian reasons, of Rodolfo Montiel and Teodoro Cabrera, two environmental activists in Mexico. This effort in the field of human rights was also reflected in the broad disclosure of State security agencies files, which will contribute to increasing transparency regarding both present and past events, thus making it a central element of my administration. Mexico is taking concrete steps to demonstrate that its commitment to the norms of the international community is profound, sincere and resolute.

The establishment of the United Nations more than 50 years ago was the triumph of hope and freedom over the suffering inflicted by the two world wars on humanity. Today, however, threats to peace and security do not emerge only from acts of aggression among States. The new threats also arise from internal conflicts that have cross-border effects, such as the massive movement of displaced peoples, humanitarian tragedies, grave violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the exacerbation of nationalism and religious fanaticism. These threats also derive from worldwide phenomena such as transnational organized crime, environmental degradation, AIDS, and, of course, terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

There is no doubt that the magnitude and the cruelty of the 11 September attacks have underscored the vulnerability of States and the fragility of world peace. It is a matter of concern to us that terrorist groups can gain access to weapons of mass destruction and that they also benefit from the traffic in arms, organized crime, money laundering and drug trafficking.

International terrorism not only flouts international law, but it also endangers the stability of the community of nations and economic development processes, increasing unemployment and preventing headway from being made in the alleviation of poverty. For this reason, Mexico categorically rejects any argument that seeks to justify terrorist activities. Nothing — not the justness of a cause, the inequality of forces with respect to an antagonist, poverty, or any other grounds — can justify resorting to violence for political ends.

Mexico reiterates its commitment to the fight against terrorism and its decision to fully implement resolution 1373 (2001) of the Security Council, which establishes a series of measures for fighting international terrorism and cutting its ties to practices such as money laundering and organized crime.

We are firmly committed to the fight against new threats to international peace and security. We believe that the international community should meet these challenges on the basis of three principles: first, the supremacy of the United Nations; secondly, the strengthening of international cooperation in resolving global problems; and thirdly, the shaping of an international order based on universally observed rules and standards that meet the needs and aspirations of the community of nations.

The Government of Mexico is determined to assist in this effort. For that reason, Mexico feels deeply honoured to have been elected, after a 20-year absence, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for 2002-2003. It wishes to express its deep commitment in this respect. We thank the international community for its support and express our determination to work actively and responsibly in favour of the maintenance of international peace and security. Our intention is that Mexico's participation in the Security Council will amplify the voices of countries that are not usually heard on the international scene.

In the search for lasting solutions to the new threats now facing the international system, we must not fail to address situations that have contributed to their emergence, such as the lack of economic development in many nations, the deepening of poverty and exclusion. The challenges of development not only remain with us, but have gradually increased with the growing economic and social inequalities.

Mexico therefore calls on the international community to give priority to the fight against poverty and social exclusion. My country reaffirms its interest in taking a lead in promoting the Agenda for Development, providing it with renewed impetus and a more effective approach, so that the United Nations and the multilateral institutions can fulfil the commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration.

It is because of the importance we attach to this issue that Mexico offered to host the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held next year in Monterrey. I invite all heads of State or Government to contribute, through their active participation in the Conference, to strengthening the international community's efforts to promote world development that is more just and more equitable, thus creatively helping to improve the institutions responsible for development financing.

We face the complex task of integrating our societies, without exclusion, in the process of the joint creation and equitable distribution of the opportunities and benefits of globalization. We must ensure that all citizens become stakeholders in that process; to do that, we need an enabling international environment, including sufficient levels of public and private

funding, along with the consolidation of an inclusive international economic system that is conducive to more equitable human development.

It will be impossible to make the world more just if we permit the exclusion of the most vulnerable groups. That is why my Government has just proposed the establishment of a special committee to draft a broad, comprehensive international convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of disabled persons. The convention's ultimate goal should be to put in place a binding universal legal instrument for the benefit of the disabled, guaranteeing the fundamental rights of millions of men, women and children worldwide. Mexico hopes that this important endeavour will enjoy the support of the States Members of the United Nations.

The history of relations among nations reflects successes, but also sadly missed opportunities. Today, our efforts to combat terrorism and to promote development — the two focuses of my statement today — may be the start of a new history of successes for the United Nations.

The brutal events of 11 September make it imperative that we, the international community, engage in multilateral negotiations to formulate new rules and standards to guarantee international peace and security. There is no doubt that the way in which our nations face the challenge of terrorism will have an impact on the principles and priorities of international relations in coming years.

As a country that is a bridge between regions and cultures, Mexico is determined to play an active and leading role in shaping an international system that can meet the challenges facing us today.

This is a defining moment. Our fundamental values and the vitality and viability of the United Nations are being put to the test. The community of nations must show that it can meet this extraordinary challenge. This can be a new founding stage in the history of the Organization, which will yield the mandates and competences that are indispensable in a world that is starkly different from that of 1945 but whose aspirations to peace, respect for human dignity, justice and freedom still remain those of the San Francisco Charter.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United Mexican States for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Vicente Fox, President of the United Mexican States, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Jorge Batlle Ibáñez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

Mr. Jorge Batlle Ibáñez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Jorge Batlle Ibáñez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Batlle Ibáñez (*spoke in Spanish*): I want first of all to stress that, under the current circumstances, our presence — everybody's presence — at this general debate unquestionably takes on special significance.

Every year, the United Nations prepares and submits to Member States for their consideration a comprehensive agenda containing many items of varied scope and nature. This session is no exception: the United Nations will not stop.

Yet, many things now appear completely different. The city of New York, the United States and every country, and the people of the United States and every people — all of humankind — have been cruelly attacked by terrorism, and its threat hangs over every one of us and over natural and peaceful relations among the peoples of the world. In short, this is a global phenomenon that demands of us a global answer and that has marked the start of the new millennium. The nations of my continent believe that to be so. The statements made by the Presidents of Brazil and of Mexico, which I endorse, made that perfectly clear.

The Millennium Summit, which brought us together here last year, provided an opportunity for us to identify the issues that affect us all and that we must face as part of a challenge that no one can avoid. It

defined an agenda of peace and hope for a world affected by common problems, although, it must be said, in different ways.

Today, we face a new scenario. Perhaps as never before, all of us, and hence the United Nations, have a common goal: to respond to terrorism, irrespective of boundaries, ideologies, religions, races and cultures. That commitment, undertaken with responsibility, involves taking every possible action without ever forgetting the higher goal: peace, whose supreme guarantee must continue to be international law and the conventions and treaties to which we are parties.

But there is no doubt that such a commitment is not enough. We must fight every form of terrorism at every level, domestic and international, and on every front — legal, military, security and intelligence, administrative and management. This demands of us strong conviction, confidence in our shared values, faith in humankind and the affirmation of life as the highest value.

Terrorism is blind and wicked by definition. Blind because it does not conceive or communicate goals shared by the rest and so plunges into irrationality. Wicked because it indiscriminately destroys people and property and sows fear, anxiety and sometimes panic.

Nevertheless, to fight it it will also be necessary to move against other enemies of peace, such as poverty and underdevelopment, to give every person good reason to live and to make all of us guardians of humankind, which is a common good from which no one must feel excluded, and for which we must fight unwaveringly.

There is no cause or banner that could justify this violence. That is precisely why we must prevent marginalization, helplessness and desperation from taking root in people's souls so that they look approvingly and complacently on the criminal actions of which we are victims.

Our task, then, is to galvanize everyone's spirit in the struggle against terrorism, because terrorism not only fails to help solve the problems afflicting society as a whole but also fills it with fear and plunges it into paralysis and confusion.

We move with ever greater determination towards a world and, consequently, towards a society that is evidently more and more globalized. The events of 11 September demonstrate that very clearly. Every people and every Government has been affected by those events.

We are all involved in what happens, in a more profound way than ever, because what happened not only affects the security of the people; it raises questions that are much simpler, but the answers to which are complex: what are all of our lives going to be like from now on? What is the life of my family going to be like? Of my children? Of my parents? And of the others, my neighbours, my friends? How will the simple acts of my life change? Will I be able to travel, receive letters, use transportation and cross bridges — without second thoughts, as was natural to us before?

This world and, in particular, the United Nations face a challenge for which they are not duly prepared. We have created the technological and communication means to unify the planet and globalize it. But we neither know how nor have the proper instruments to properly manage this process.

We are living through an amazing revolution, and it must be guided — driving it forward if it stalls, limiting it if it goes too far — in order to achieve the goals enabling the structuring of a new, balanced international system that takes into account the changes that have occurred for humankind over the last 50 years.

The United Nations was born as a response to a world that today no longer exists. The instruments and institutions it created in the past were a response to past realities — replaced today by new realities — in the political, demographic, cultural, religious and ecological spheres.

All the many countries that make up this global society and that, together, navigate through space, have the obligation of confronting this new reality, drawing on our diversity.

Uruguay, a small country, but one with a long international tradition — it was a participant in the 1907 Hague Conference to implement arbitration as the method for resolving conflicts, a member of the League of Nations and a founding Member of the United Nations in San Francisco — feels that this is our current situation, and we are ready to shoulder our due share of responsibility.

In the past, we created international financial and monetary institutions, and others for international

trade, such as the World Trade Organization, which is meeting today in Doha. All these institutions govern our activities and determine what we must do. But they never act in concert. While the world is global, their decisions are sectoral or singular.

While loans are granted to us or fiscal or monetary adjustments are required of us, the doors to markets do not at the same time open to our products and our labour. This way, instead of participating in the process of globalization, we are closed in nearly sealed compartments. Those who have attained a certain level of growth grow even more, while the rest, save a few exceptions, suffer losses and fall further away from the levels that would make it possible to enjoy the necessary prosperity.

Today the planet has 6 billion inhabitants. Only 1.1 billion of them live in developed areas. In 2050, not long from now — my grandchildren will not yet have reached my age — the planet will have 9.3 billion inhabitants, but still only 1.1 billion will live in developed areas.

Poverty not only destroys democracy. What is worse, it destroys societies and paves the way for violence and, as we have often seen, even in our midst, all forms of terrorism.

Finally, we consider it appropriate to repeat that we are far from holding the answer necessary for the world we have created.

We might not have spoken aloud these thoughts that assuredly many of us have always had, had it not been for the thousands of innocent women and men that died on that ill-fated 11 September. We owe to them — whom Americans will always remember with love and grief, feelings we also share — our most important responsibility: to see to it that they did not die in vain.

Their tragic fate has shown us our duty. Now it is time to do it.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Jorge Batlle Ibáñez, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Fernando de la Rúa, President of the Argentine Republic

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Argentine Republic.

Mr. Fernando de la Rúa, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Fernando de la Rúa, President of the Argentine Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President de la Rúa (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly. We are especially pleased that the designation went to a personality with such a remarkable career, a representative of the Republic of Korea, a country that maintains a friendly relationship and intense cooperation with Argentina. I also wish to acknowledge the excellent way in which the Foreign Minister of Finland, Mr. Harri Holkeri, presided over the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

I would also like to express our satisfaction at the re-election of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for a second term. This reflects the unanimous support of the international community for the way in which he has decisively confronted the great challenges of peace, the rule of law and development at this very difficult stage of international life. The support given to him by the Member States reflects the widespread high opinion of his efforts and the work of the Organization, which was confirmed by the Nobel Peace Prize, a distinction that brings honour to those who work in the service of the United Nations and to its clear-sighted Secretary-General.

This distinction also comes at a moment when the full relevance of the United Nations has become dramatically urgent as a result of the criminal attacks against the United States of 11 September. In the face of those events, I wish to reiterate our solidarity and commitment with its Government and people. It was an attack against us all, against all humankind.

Those events have shown that terrorism can strike at any State and that no country can fight it in isolation. It is an international threat, and the only existing institution with the global reach, the United Nations,

must confront that threat within the political and legal framework established by the Organization.

The Millennium Declaration had already set as one of its objectives the adoption of concerted measures against international terrorism and the need for all States to accede as soon as possible to all the relevant international conventions. The adoption of Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001) and of General Assembly resolution 56/1 shows that the United Nations has been equal to the circumstances, with the goal of using every means available to counter the threat to peace and security represented by terrorism.

The global effort against terrorism is an imperative for the international community, one blessed by the United Nations. Within the guidelines approved by the Organization, all States, groups of States or regional organizations must contribute to this common struggle.

Argentina expresses its full commitment to the fight against terrorism. Our nation has twice suffered attacks of this nature, in 1992 and 1994. The memory of those events helps us to understand the grief for innocent victims and to say that this fight is also our fight.

The recent Security Council and General Assembly resolutions have been supplemented by other instruments that reflect the will of the majority of States to define any terrorist act, without exception, as criminal and unjustifiable, no matter what the intended purposes. Existing resolutions and conventions have outlined a series of specific measures and rules to foster judicial and police cooperation and have criminalized many acts of terrorism, enshrining the principle that all States have an obligation to prosecute and punish the perpetrators.

Argentina is a party to the majority of the international treaties in effect and is making progress on ratifying the remainder, among them the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, of 1997, and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, of 1999. We support the conclusion of the conventions currently under consideration that should be finalized before the end of this year, such as the convention on nuclear terrorism. I hope that the negotiations on a convention of a general nature will be successfully concluded. The existence of political differences or different interpretations related to other situations should not distract us from the urgent need to develop an instrument that would encompass all aspects of this threat.

At the level of the hemisphere, we have put into practice the regional system of legitimate defence and collective security established in the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. At the same time, we have fostered the full operation of the Inter-American Committee on Terrorism and the drafting of an inter-American convention, that complements existing universal conventions, as well as the convening of a special conference on hemispheric security.

At the regional level, the countries of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) are promoting measures to enhance technical and operational coordination, cooperation and assistance among the various agencies entrusted with the fight against terrorism in the field.

We must be aware that the approach to this problem will be incomplete if we fail to recognize the factors that nourish terrorism. In the framework of the increasing interdependence that characterizes the present stage of economic life, the benefits of development reach only a few States, and the increasing marginalization of countries and societies that live in extreme poverty, the tragedy of neglected or undernourished children, sickness and hunger become more evident. This uneven economic distribution, made even more tangible by modern communications, causes frustration in wide sectors of the dispossessed and creates the conditions for the outbreak of conflicts and confrontations, on which fundamentalist movements of various kinds are at work. This is why we need to reaffirm here the fundamental statement made a few years ago by Pope Paul VI: "the new name for peace is development".

This is a task for the international community as a whole, in a joint effort and a spirit of solidarity. It is wrong to minimize the importance of international cooperation and to leave on their own those who have problems surviving in the face of global economic competition.

The launching of a new round of negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO) could be an important signal to control the increasingly protectionist tendencies and to promote world economic recovery in the short term and growth in the

long term. It is a signal that will also bring additional confidence to the financial markets. Through the launching of a new round in Qatar, the 142 member countries of the WTO could give impetus to a process that lays the foundations for a more equitable and peaceful world.

The persistence of conflicts such as the one in the Middle East is a source of tension, with a wide range of repercussions for the region, causing legitimate concern for the international community. The Argentine Republic wishes to renew its expression of support for a stable and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on respect for the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish an independent State, as well as recognition of the right of the State of Israel to live in peace within safe and internationally recognized borders.

Violence and terrorism in any form are absolutely unacceptable and can only exacerbate the situation. The parties should urgently agree on a ceasefire and begin negotiations on a final settlement, which until recently seemed reachable.

The Secretary-General has offered us a road map for implementing the Millennium Declaration, which provides a responsible programme for confronting our current serious circumstances. The principal milestones of that road map deserve our support as a sound way towards peace-building and strengthening our security: the rule of law to fight terrorism with determination; conflict prevention and the strengthening of peacekeeping operations; the reform of sanctions regimes in order to avoid affecting civilian populations; the eradication of poverty and the promotion of development; respect for fundamental human rights throughout the world and for political and religious plurality; and the firm rejection of any attempt to associate certain religious creeds or nationalities with violence or terrorism.

We also share the Secretary-General's view of the importance of putting an end to the culture of impunity by bringing to trial the perpetrators of extremely serious international crimes. We underscore the historical importance of the establishment of the International Criminal Court and we reaffirm our support for measures to promote its prompt launching.

The great majority of humankind desires a future of peace and progress. The irrationality and violence of a minority can be isolated and defeated on the basis of cooperation among nations following these general principles, which we endorsed in the Millennium Declaration, and in regard to which we propose concrete measures today. We trust that we shall be up to that challenge.

I cannot conclude without recalling, as the General Assembly already knows, that the Argentine Republic is still engaged in a sovereignty dispute with the United Kingdom over the Malvinas, South Georgias and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas. The recovery of the full exercise of sovereignty over that part of our national territory, respecting the interests of their inhabitants and international law, is a precept enshrined in our Constitution. This issue is on the agenda of this Organization, which through repeated resolutions has asked the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to resume negotiations on a just and lasting solution to the sovereignty dispute and thus to put an end to a colonial situation imposed by force in 1833.

Today, in response to that request, Argentina again reiterates its full readiness to resume bilateral negotiations with the United Kingdom in order to resolve the issue, as well as its support for the mission of good offices appropriately entrusted to the Secretary-General by the General Assembly to assist the parties in achieving that goal.

I conclude by calling for peace, justice and solidarity, so widely sought by all peoples defending life throughout the world.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Argentine Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Fernando de la Rúa, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United

Nations His Excellency Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Chávez Frías (*spoke in Spanish*): Just over a year ago, we were here, attending the Millennium Summit, some 100 days before the dawn of the twenty-first century. At that time, I made a statement on behalf of Venezuela and its Bolivarian people, referring to the supreme example of Christ and his struggle for justice, peace and life.

In the brief span of time since then, having embarked on the new century — albeit with very painful steps, I should say — we have suffered the abominable terrorist attack of 11 September. In opposition to the culture of peace, to the dialogue among civilizations declared by the United Nations in 2001 and to the good will of the peoples of the world, the drums of war are suddenly thundering again and we say, louder and more passionately than we have in the past, that this struggle for peace is of fundamental importance.

From the outset, Venezuela and its people, Government and institutions have joined in the chorus of voices that first rose to reject these heinous acts. At this meeting in New York, in this incredible city, in this nation of North America, we take this opportunity to reiterate our grief and sympathy for the people and Government of the United States and its institutions over the attacks and the pain they have caused. We say, as we have said from the very day of the tragedy that has plunged the world into mourning and peril, that the fight against terrorism should become a war against war — a fight to achieve peace.

At the Millennium Summit, we also said, like Simón Bolivar, the liberator of South America, remembering his dream of the summit of Chimborazo: Let us speak the truth to all men and women. And precisely on the basis of the horrible and frightful truths that we are experiencing today in the world, let us call for a new world pact in the United Nations. We said in that speech just over one year ago that at the present time in our world human beings continue to die each day, but now the figures have doubled, and not because of a world war. No, now the principal causes of the horrible truth affecting the world's people are poverty, marginalization and hunger. What is foremost in this dramatic and tragic moment is that we must recognize the truth and then build a new global pact in the United Nations without delay.

Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century and the third millennium, we at the United Nations should concentrate our greatest possible efforts on the moral, intellectual, scientific, social, cultural, economic and financial order in the fight against the demons of hunger, poverty and death that afflict the planet. This is what we said a year ago in this beautiful setting. I believe we are fulfilling the mandate of Bolivar to state the truth to all men and women.

Venezuela recognized the validity, the necessity, the great vision and the truth that our Secretary-General launched as a challenge to all of us in the preparatory document that subsequently became the Millennium Declaration. Today, our dear friend Kofi Annan reminded us of that challenge in his comments opening this session of debates, when he recalled, for example, that last year we committed ourselves to reducing poverty 50 per cent by the year 2015, having set quantifiable and precise goals, such as reducing by half the number of human beings who survive on incomes of less than one dollar per day.

At the Millennium Summit, great truths were stated and we heard the appeals of our peoples. We said then and continue to say that all of the world's children must have access to a full education by the year 2015. As the Secretary-General also reminded us, all human beings should have access to potable water. We are not talking about the Internet — we are talking about drinking water, the water basic to life.

The goals set last year were discussed over the following weeks in hundreds of marvellous speeches. But today, one year later, we must continue to ask ourselves how we are going to achieve them. What are the successful strategies that can be employed to achieve these lofty goals? The answer is justice, the only path to true peace. We said that we had come to uncover truths; that for the honour, dignity and life of our peoples, we must come here to speak without fear. We said that here, in this setting, we must speak without the double standard that sometimes invades our discussions. As I see our brothers from India here, I think of the Hindu philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti, who spoke of truth as a basic dynamic in understanding the secrets of life. Truth, truth, truth. We want truths. If we do not recognize truths, it will be difficult for us to

find true solutions to the horrible tragedies that the world is living through.

On behalf of the people of Venezuela, I return here today to contribute ideas to the effort to seek truths and to speak true words that spring from a combination of reason and passion. They are not just cold words on paper but come from the heart, and they must not remain on paper as cold discourse but must touch the wound of real truth. Today, truth is an open wound and it is our ultimate challenge to heal it. We come, then, without fear, in good faith and with much optimism about life, brotherhood, unity and the possibility that we, as the leaders of our countries, can seek, grasp and build together real solutions to real problems in the quest for justice and peace.

We in Venezuela believe that the world must be examined under a great and powerful magnifying glass, because it has gone to bad to worse, stumbling and struggling from error to error. At the end of the Second World War, the United Nations was born to struggle for peace and prevent new horrors from happening. We have not avoided those horrors. The Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union fell at the end of the twentieth century, and voices were raised saying history has come to an end: we have arrived at the end of our path, the final era, one of technology, of the global village, of globalization, of the new world order. This is the triumph of a model — the triumph of one philosophy as the result of the collapse of another. But that claim was a lie. Who can claim victory in today's world, which is filled with poverty and tears, pain and death? What model could claim victory?

Venezuela would like to make a fervent and passionate appeal, hopeful that we will be properly understood — indeed, we are sure that we will be, because we are speaking with love, faith and hope, calling on the Lord God, invoking life and peace and respect for brotherhood. Let our words be properly understood. We must undertake a thorough examination of and review the political models that exist in our countries today. In America we speak of democracy — yes, democracy. But in Venezuela we ask what kind of democracy we are talking about. A democracy such as Venezuela had for 40 years, from 1958 to 1998, which ended up destroying a people, taking away their sovereignty and causing them to live in poverty in a fertile land rich with resources such as oil and gold? That was no more than an ornamental flourish that mimicked democracy, and it ended in tyranny. We never again want such a democracy in Venezuela, and we are certain that we will never have it again. Democracy must be based on popular participation, ethics, justice and equality.

We in Venezuela have been saying that we must also review the economic models that some tried to put in place among our peoples. Is neoliberalism the way? Yes — it is the way to hell. Let us traverse the streets and cities of Latin America and we will see the consequences of neoliberal policies run wild, as His Holiness John Paul II has said. We must review our economies, our ethics, our policies — everything must be re-examined today if we want the world to be a viable place and if we want peace to reign on earth.

Is globalization the path to development? It could be, if it were based on justice, equality and respectful relations among all. We need to re-examine everything. As Viviane Forrester said, using the phrase "economic horror", the world is undergoing a process of change, and that should also be cause for optimism. The world is changing; it is moving on. New developments are taking place; let us move with them, peacefully and democratically, while searching for justice. As Ignacio Ramonet said in his reflections in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, alternative paths are appearing all over the world. Venezuela is making its humble contribution through a peaceful and democratic revolution. We are committed to the human being, to an international policy of peace, friendship, respect and multipolarity. And we are here today to reaffirm that commitment.

Venezuela is speaking out in condemning terrorism. Venezuela is speaking out — and taking action — in expressing its solidarity in the struggle against terrorism. At the same time, in speaking out we are giving voice to the mandate of the United Nations to ensure respect for international law and human rights. Any action taken against any crime must be legitimate. It must be based on respect for human rights and international law. No one should understand Venezuela's words to be a condemnation of anything or anyone. We are calling for reflection so as to ensure that we act within the norms of international law and the mandates of the United Nations. We cannot throw that overboard.

Venezuela has also shouldered its responsibility in various forums and international arenas. Within the Organization of American States, we are proposing that a social charter be adopted, in addition to the

Democratic Charter, to give more weight to our continent's struggles to place the human being at the forefront of our endeavours. Within the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, of which we hold the presidency of the conference of heads of State, we proposed — and achieved consensus among all — to ensure balance and dialogue between the producers and consumers of oil, aware as we are of the need to guarantee supplies and a fair price for all for that vital resource for development and for life.

Within the Group of Fifteen, Venezuela, which holds the chairmanship, is promoting the North-South dialogue, in particular the need to revitalize it. It should not be a dialogue of the deaf, but a dialogue of equals who are seeking solutions — dialogue and cooperation of South with South and of Latin America and the Caribbean with Africa, Asia and all the peoples of the world. Within the Group of 77, Venezuela is working for the same strategic consensus, dialogue and unity. We are very optimistic, as everyone should be.

Despite everything, however, we need great political will — greater political will — to bring about all of those changes and transformations. To use the vocabulary of the theory of war, we must put the cavalry on the front line. The cavalry is policy; the cavalry is ethics and the will for change, which we must promote.

Finally, I believe that, over and above the pain, the condemnation and the struggle against terrorism and against the savages who perpetrated those horrific attacks, the greatest honour must go to the fallen — the innocent victims of those acts, and the many other victims throughout the world, those who have suffered and for whom we have wept: the innocent children who have fallen, the men and the women. The British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said something that I thought was wonderful in response to a comment that I made during a conversation we had in Downing Street a few days ago. He said that if anything good can come from this crisis and this pain, it is a global alliance to combat the causes of violence throughout the world.

Those who have spoken before me have pointed out many of these causes. The Emir of Qatar and Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference also made a very important point. He said that our words should not once again remain empty. As we say in our part of the world, there is a big difference between words and action. Now is the time to move towards concrete action. We want to see a Palestinian State become a reality. Let us not come here day after day, month after month and year after year just to repeat the same old words. Let us move on towards reality. We want to see the transformation of the Bretton Woods institutions. We want to see the transformation of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. We want justice for the wretched of the Earth, as Frantz Fanon said. But we want it now, not tomorrow; tomorrow may be too late.

In conclusion, as I said during the debate on 7 September last year, quoting from the Bible,

> "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven". (*The Holy Bible, Ecclesiastes 3:1*)

Sisters and brothers of this planet in sorrow, of this our world, let us do all that we can. Truly, we must transform this difficult time in which we are living into a time of the people, a time of justice; that is the only way to achieve genuine peace. As I ended by saying last year, let us save the world!

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Ricardo Lagos, President of the Republic of Chile

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Chile.

Mr. Ricardo Lagos, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Ricardo Lagos, President of the Republic of Chile, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Lagos (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I wish to congratulate you on your election, which is a mark of recognition of the Republic of Korea and of your distinguished personal record in the public and academic spheres. I am

confident that, under your guidance, the work of the Assembly will be successful for the States Members of the United Nations.

Today New York is receiving us as it always has. Why, then, did we witness, two months ago, a terrorist act that shook the world? If I may be allowed to say so, it is because New York is the city that best represents the values that the twentieth century defended at the cost of tremendous suffering. It is a city that welcomes those persecuted by intolerance of all kinds; respects all nationalities, races and religions, all ideas, and the freedom to think and to create; offers opportunities for all to succeed; and protects individual rights through democracy.

It is not by chance that it was here in New York, on the banks of the East River, that the Headquarters of the United Nations was erected. It was built here because the values of this city are the values of our universal Organization of nations.

The terrorist attack on New York was therefore an attack on the unity of our nations. It was our values, our security and our faith in a better world — a world based on dialogue and cooperation — that were the targets of terrorist fanaticism. That is why we have felt so close to the United States during this period: its pain is our pain; its grief is our grief; and its response to terrorism is our response.

We are here to reiterate our condolences to the people and to the Government of the United States. The sight of thousands of persons bearing photographs of their lost family members amid the smoking ruins gave rise to a profound sense of empathy among Chileans.

Hence we wish to express our admiration for the unity and courage of the American people and of the city of New York. We pay tribute to the Government of the United States and to President Bush, who, faced with an attack of this magnitude, has managed to act on the basis of reason rather than emotion in seeking diplomatic support and in building an extremely broad-based coalition.

The holding of this General Assembly marks a sound defeat for the terrorist cause, which seeks to replace dialogue with the cult of violence, and reflects our renewed faith in this world forum.

We are here to extend to the Secretary-General and to the United Nations our warmest congratulations on having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, which this year has recognized the outstanding contribution of the United Nations to our quest for peace.

Many have remarked that the twentieth century has been one of the most violent and deadly in the history of humankind. However, the twentieth century was also the century that produced major advances, improved our quality of life and eliminated great evils forever.

The First World War was followed by the League of Nations and by a new awareness of the fundamental equality of peoples. The Second World War was necessary to put an end to fascism in its most monstrous manifestations, but also out of it emerged the United Nations, the decolonization process, the Bretton Woods economic agreements and a new awareness of the fundamental equality of human beings. The cold war brought about a clash between two political and economic visions, but, once ended, it left in its wake a new awareness of democracy and individual freedoms.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, we are confronting a new conflict of global proportions. Our first objective must be to put an end forever to fanaticism and to the kind of intolerance that is translated into terror.

Chile believes that this vast diplomatic alliance must also pursue other objectives. Like other victorious coalitions throughout history, it must begin to ask now what new progress it will seek to achieve for humanity after its victory. We must start to envision the new world that must emerge from this tragic period in our history — a world that is better organized and that shows more solidarity. Indeed, the terrorists will have achieved their objective if, as a result of their attacks, the globalization process changes direction and begins a trend towards less freedom and decreased international trade.

On the other hand, as the Secretary-General has so rightly said, in order to achieve success in the globalization process, we must learn how to manage it better and, above all, how to manage it better together.

I think that it is very important to understand that of the 6 billion people in the world, half are struggling to live on less than $2 a day. They have no personal computer; they have never made a telephone call. They have never seen these things. Though wealth has increased, there has been no significant decrease in the

number of poor people, and the gap between rich and poor is daily becoming increasingly difficult to bridge. The balance of our world is becoming precarious, and we must address this issue.

The recent tragic events have shown us that no nation on earth that can consider itself invulnerable and that genuine security can be attained only through cooperation among peoples and States. What makes our citizens vulnerable today — besides terrorism — are such phenomena as ignorance, hunger, drug trafficking, climate change, uncontrolled population movements, and the erratic flow of $1.5 trillion every day in financial markets. We must devise ways of tackling these phenomena.

Chile therefore supports the coalition of countries that, in exercise of the right of self-defence, have embarked on a campaign aimed at eradicating terrorism. At stake here are the universal principles and values that we share and that we must defend. These actions, therefore, are not targeting the Afghan people or the Arab world, nor are they aimed at any particular religion, all of which we deeply respect and admire.

In order to put an end to terrorism, there is a need for broad, ongoing and resolute cooperation. That is why Chile has supported the responses decided upon in this Organization. We are actively implementing Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). We are already a party to the 12 global conventions against terrorism, and today we will deposit with the Secretary-General the respective instruments of ratification. My country has ratified all United Nations agreements.

Similarly, we are working to coordinate America's response. We are partners in a comprehensive dialogue to review and improve each country's domestic legislation and legal order to root out the terrorist threat.

We reaffirm the need to strengthen measures to promote mutual confidence and cooperation in the area of defence. In that regard, Argentina and Chile have standardized their data on military expenditures, and we are working towards the same objective with our neighbour Peru.

Yet we cannot conceal our frustration at the difficulties blocking progress towards limiting the manufacture of and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

We also feel obliged to say that we view with horror the deteriorating situation in the Middle East. That conflict poses a threat to international security. Like other delegations that have spoken today, we hope for recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to establish an independent State, as well as the right of Israel to live within secure and internationally recognized borders and at peace with its neighbours.

Recent acts of international terrorism have affected our economies, which are the basis for social progress for our peoples. Fear has gripped the markets. The only certainty today is that uncertainty will prevail in the future so long as there is armed action because of this conflict. If that proves to be the case, and if international markets fall, terrorism will have achieved an unexpected victory.

I therefore want to say that institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank must address the concerns of the international political bodies and devote special attention to the additional costs of the response to terrorism. We are confident of success at the Doha, Qatar, ministerial meeting, which will be discussing ways to make trade freer. We want to address items of concern to all: agricultural products, services, intellectual property, anti-dumping and the settlement of trade disputes. They are all on the agenda, and they must all be addressed.

The great coalition assembled to combat terrorism must also promote cooperation among Governments in order to ensure that no areas are excluded from globalization. That is the best way to guarantee security for us all. To create a safer world, we need more and better globalization, not more autarky. We need more and better democracy, not more dictatorial authoritarianism. We must do a better job of protecting human rights. Here, I believe we must act preventively to safeguard our democracies and to ensure respect for human rights.

Democracy is strengthened with each free and secret election with the participation of an informed electorate. It is strengthened with higher levels of justice and social equality. To restore people's confidence in democracy, democracy must be complemented by an end to social injustice. Neither lack of development nor specific cultural characteristics can be used as a pretext to justify curtailing rights recognized in the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights. The fight against discrimination and intolerance must be a frontal attack on poverty.

We need institutions that ensure respect for human rights. Hence the importance of the International Criminal Court, which should serve as an key instrument for the universal protection of fundamental human rights, whatever the status of the violator.

I have come from afar, from the South of the world, with an optimistic vision. Before leaving my country, I met with young people of varied origins and with dignitaries of different religions. I met with Catholic and Protestant bishops; with Jewish and Muslim representatives: all those with whom we share an annual joint religious service — unique in the world — to celebrate our national independence. I saw in all of them — Jews and Muslims; Catholics, Protestants and freethinkers — a renewed capacity for understanding and comprehension that I am sure is shared among western and eastern countries, among ethnic groups and religions — in short, among all those here today — with the objective of attaining our common objective of peace and progress.

Let us learn from our experience in assembling this great global coalition to respond politically and militarily to the terrorist threat. Let us make it into a coalition that also seeks other goals. In this coalition, all are important, irrespective of creed, race, political history or ideology; in the coalition there are no small or large countries.

Let us ensure that international institutions take due account of the interests of all countries, large, medium-sized and small. Let us ensure that this grand coalition will bring us security not only against terrorism but also against hunger, vulnerability and discrimination. I propose that we should update the institutions that the founders of the United Nations created here 50 years ago.

That would be the most fitting tribute to the victims of terrorism and the best gauge of our commitment to the weak and powerless of the Earth.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Chile for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Ricardo Lagos, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Khatami (*spoke in Farsi; English text furnished by the delegation*): At the outset, Sir, I would like to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. I would also like to express my appreciation for the wise and persistent efforts of the Secretary-General during the current crucial world situation.

Human society stepped into the third millennium with hopes and expectations. The United Nations designated the last year of the twentieth century as the International Year for the Culture of Peace and the first year of the twenty-first century as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations. Today, however, the world faces immense tragedies and grave concerns. One of the most brutal and savage manifestations of this was the terrorist attack against the American people.

The decisive, immediate and unequivocal global condemnation of the terrorist attacks of 11 September represents the emergence of a public attitude and common political will all over the world to counter terrorism in all its manifestations, irrespective of motives, perpetrators or victims. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran spoke of the "jihad against this evil phenomenon" so as to highlight the genuine view of Islam and the Islamic Revolution vis-à-vis terrorism and violence.

Immediately after the carnage of 11 September, and in the name of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I expressed sympathy with

the American nation and all the victims of that criminal act. And in the first days of the tragedy, in a letter to the Secretary-General, I underlined that,

> "Terrorism is the common problem of today's world. It threatens peace, liberty, spirituality, knowledge, culture and global coexistence. A sustainable solution to this hideous and dangerous phenomenon requires vision, serious political will and active participation and cooperation of all members of the human society."

The threat of terrorism should not be underestimated, nor should its devastating consequences be measured only in the visible realm of politics. Terrorism is the chronic menace of our era, rooted in the mentality of violence, the logic of might and the practice of injustice and discrimination. When spirituality, ethics and justice find no room in the realms of politics, economics and culture, and when discrimination, marginalization, exclusion and the application of double standards push justice aside, the world is bound to face alienation, despair, extremism and lawlessness. In such a climate, terrorism finds fertile ground for growth.

The disaster in the United States is so tragic and grave that thinkers are urgently called on to engage in deep reflection and dialogue on its real causes. For many years, our great thinkers have cautioned us to avoid submission to instrumental reasoning, warning of the threats and tragedies that it could generate.

On the other hand, some of the great thinkers of our time have ascribed atrocities such as fascism to the reign of mythological speculation. They have attributed the emergence of fascism not to the expansion of rationality but to evading rationality and succumbing to the reign of myth.

This does not mean that we will succumb to mythical speculation if we do not want to. We have the choice not to negate rationality. But at the same time, we must also combine rationality with empathy, the mind with the heart. Neither one can be without the other. Neither one can be neglected. If it is, it will lead to tragedy, no matter under what pretext, religion, race, nationalism or any other nation. The same mythical speculation is seen in modern cult ideology, which is a form of rationality that is reduced to instrumental reasoning and thereby stripped of all its moral and human aspects. Religion, tradition, philosophy and art descend to achieving only one goal, that of political ends.

One of the most common features of these ideologies, which is regrettably prevalent, is the glorification of the self and the demonization of opposing groups and ideas. The advocates of this ideology in the West attribute to Islam, the religion of humanity, compassion and justice, such labels as terrorism. In the same manner, in parts of the Islamic world, the West is equated with suppression. Such polarization of the world and human beings would lead to horrifying political and security consequences for the whole world.

The world has yet to overcome the horror and disbelief caused by the malicious terrorist attacks of 11 September against thousands of innocent people. At the same time, the most destructive modern weapons are being used in one of the most deprived parts of the world against an oppressed and dispossessed people. Once again, history repeats its sad experience that war triggers war.

The time is ripe for us to analyse the history and consequences of exclusionary ways of acting, to initiate ways to engage intellectuals from different cultures in dialogue and to encourage the public to embark upon learning for the sake of dialogue and dialogue for the sake of learning and to reinforce the art of listening as sacred and invaluable.

Angry politicians should be prevented from taking the initiative in ongoing developments. They should be made to yield to the judgement of wisdom and fairness.

The American nation has experienced one of the most brutal forms of terrorism, in which the blind hatred of terrorists has prevented the recovery of the bodies of the victims of the 11 September tragedy. Today, other nations walk hand in hand with the American nation.

Today, beyond mere rhetoric, one can see the convergence of the ideas of the peoples of the United States and Iran, who have also experienced, in earlier times, the mute but brutal massacre resulting from the use of chemical weapons. This convergence of ideas can also be discerned among all those refugees and displaced persons who are victims of war, suppression and terrorism — including State and non-State terrorism — in Afghanistan and Palestine.

We must have empathy for the suffering of people everywhere: in occupied Palestine, oppressed Afghanistan, New York, Washington or any corner of the globe.

We shall rise to the challenge of promoting peace, security and development among all nations on the basis of justice, and we believe that in today's interconnected world, we cannot live in islands of prosperity and progress while the rest of the world suffers from increasing poverty, illiteracy, disease and insecurity. Acquiescing to any act of terrorism, anywhere in the world, is inconsistent with any religious or ethical principle. Likewise, resorting to violence and revenge to counter such acts could hardly be justified because of ethical and humane considerations. Lacing the sacred realm of religion with violence and terror is a grave disservice to all religions and their followers. The divine religions call for peace, tolerance and compassion. They unequivocally repudiate — in essence and appearance — any thought or act of violence. I would like to quote the late leader of the Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeini, who said that "as followers of Islam, we always oppose war and desire peace and tranquillity among all States."

Let us accept that no country in the world is immune to terrorism. We should therefore seek solutions at the highest possible level.

Today there is unprecedented momentum in the world for combating terrorism, which should not be lost. To this end, the United Nations can arrange and guide a genuine and legitimate endeavour in the international fight against terrorism. The Islamic Republic of Iran is an active partner in this global coalition and spares no effort for the success of the international community in uprooting terrorism through viable, just and non-discriminatory measures. By articulating a comprehensive definition of terrorism, the United Nations can overcome one of the major historical hurdles to avoiding further misuse of that term. The adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and its effective implementation by all States can be considered a first step for a coordinated international campaign against terrorism. Moreover, negotiations on the draft comprehensive convention on terrorism, based on internationally accepted definitions and principles, would provide an effective basis for collective measures in this respect.

The 11 September attack indicated that the division between centre and periphery can no longer define the security order of the world today, for even the most marginalized sectors might be able to inflict blows on the biggest Powers. This development has taken on all the more threatening dimensions in the light of the emergence of the dangerous phenomenon of bioterrorism.

The conflict-stricken regions of the world require urgent and comprehensive attention. After decades of war, insecurity and destruction, Afghanistan needs order, law, security and stability. The ongoing military operation in Afghanistan cannot, while inflicting destruction and casualties, address the root causes of the kind of terrorism that has been forced on the defenceless people of that country. On the contrary: it is more likely that the continuation of the current military approach could incite sentiments that intensify intolerance and violence in the region and the whole world.

In the midst of the global terrorism crisis, the world faces an intensive and severe kind of terrorism in the Middle East. The occupation of the Palestinian territories, the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland, the Judaization of Palestine — in particular Al-Quds Al-Sharif — the building of illegal settlements, the killing and terrorizing of defenceless Palestinian civilians in their homeland, and the destruction of historical sites, civil institutions and residential areas are all examples of this phenomenon.

I would also like to underscore, on behalf of the Group of 77, the significance of poverty alleviation worldwide and the need for the support of the United Nations. Poverty breeds violence and intolerance. The recent slowdown in world economic growth and development caused by the terrorist attacks further aggravates the economic hardships of the developing countries.

For a secure and hopeful life, the world therefore needs innovative approaches and collective measures. Let us therefore build a coalition for peace instead of war and hostility. The initiative of dialogue among civilizations is a step in this direction, and it offers a new paradigm of interaction among nations and cultures in a world that longs for peace and security.

Can the United Nations take the lead in devising a programme to implement this fair and reasonable approach and become the focus of a global coalition for

peace based on justice? I have every confidence in the wisdom and the will of the Secretary-General — illustrated, *inter alia*, by the publication of a book, entitled *Crossing the Divide* — to define a new paradigm of dialogue among civilizations. World public opinion is supportive of this proposal. The adoption of the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations yesterday represents a beginning for the crystallization of this common desire and will of the global community.

The achievements of the thirty-first United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference in establishing dialogue among civilizations as one of its strategic objectives and in adopting the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity represent yet another serious indication of this global trend, and I wish to pay tribute to UNESCO and its Director-General. Will politicians and statesmen also submit to this approach, to prevent the transformation of the clash among States into a clash among civilizations? I am hopeful; the future will be the judge.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

The President: Before calling on the first speaker in the general debate, I should like to remind members of the decision taken by the General Assembly at its third plenary meeting, on 19 September 2001, that congratulations should not be expressed inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered. In this connection, may I remind members of another decision taken by the General Assembly at the same meeting: that speakers in the general debate, after delivering their statement, would leave the Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the podium, before returning to their seats. I would also like to appeal to Member States to limit their statements to 15 minutes.

Address by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of India.

Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Vajpayee (India) (*spoke in Hindi; interpretation provided by the delegation*): I congratulate the President on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. I also take this opportunity to warmly congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and the United Nations on being honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize.

This session of the General Assembly is being held in the shadow of the barbaric terrorist acts of 11 September, which dramatically reminded us that neither distance nor power insulates a State from terrorism. Such acts represent an arrogant rejection of the values of freedom and tolerance, which democratic and pluralistic societies cherish.

Even while uniting the nations of the world in their grief, this terrible tragedy has created the opportunity to fashion a determined global response to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, wherever it exists and under whatever name.

We in India know from our own bitter experience that terrorists develop global networks driven by religious extremism. Their operations are supported by drug trafficking, money laundering and arms smuggling. Some States follow a policy of sponsoring and sheltering them. Terrorists can only be countered through closely coordinated efforts of the international community.

Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001) are steps in the right direction, but it requires the firm political will of the freedom-loving world to implement them rigorously. The two crucial elements in this would be strict curbs on sources of financing for terrorists and denying them safe havens for training, arming and operation.

We must firmly rebuff any ideological, political or religious justification for terrorism. We should reject self-serving arguments seeking to classify terrorism according to its root causes, and therefore justifying

terrorist action somewhere while condemning it elsewhere. Those that advance these arguments should explain what the root causes of the brutal acts of 11 September were.

India supports the current campaign against the terrorist networks in Afghanistan. We hope that it reaches an early and successful conclusion. That country's current travails can only end with the establishment of a broad-based, representative and neutral Government, which would stop the export of terrorism and extremism. The international community should work towards this goal, even while the military campaign continues, so that we avoid a political vacuum at the end of the campaign.

We must recognize that current structures to facilitate a post-Taliban political settlement are unrepresentative and therefore ineffective. Located as it is in Afghanistan's neighbourhood, India's vital national interests are affected by developments in it. We also have traditionally close links with Afghanistan. This is the basis for our belief that India can play a useful role in this process.

The task of reconstruction in post-conflict Afghanistan also merits the urgent attention of the international community. It would require massive external assistance to create an economic situation conducive to the speedy return and rehabilitation of the millions of Afghans who have taken refuge in other countries of this region. Again India stands ready to join international efforts for this.

We have already announced relief assistance of a million tons of wheat, medicines and medical assistance for needy Afghans within, and outside, the country. We have also pledged $100 million to post-conflict Afghanistan for reconstruction. We are prepared to do more.

Nearly 6,000 lives were lost on 11 September, but the global economic downturn in its aftermath will take a far larger human toll, mainly in the developing world. The World Bank has estimated that tens of thousands more children will die worldwide and some 10 million more people are likely to go below the poverty line of $1 a day. It is pertinent to reflect on these chilling statistics even as the Ministerial Conference gets under way in Doha to consider World Trade Organization (WTO) issues. Before we embark on any new initiatives for globalization and sustainable development, we should recognize that political support for them will be determined primarily by the impact of these regimes on poverty.

For most developing countries, the Uruguay Round has done little for economic growth, while poverty levels and income gaps have worsened. Globalization has constrained developing countries in mobilizing public resources for poverty alleviation. That is why public support for the globalization regime has vanished in developing countries. This is also why we have argued strongly that implementation issues should first be resolved before we try to widen the WTO agenda further. Our public is unwilling to accept another post-dated cheque, when an earlier one has bounced.

Similarly, the movement towards sustainable development has proved a disappointment. Developing countries are unable to realize fair payments for their sovereign biodiversity resources and traditional knowledge. The treaties on climate change and biodiversity have also failed to activate the anticipated investment and technology transfers to developing countries. Industrialized countries have not shown the political will to enhance their overseas development budgets. Multilateral development agencies are also constrained in their resources, of which, in any case, very little is available on concessional terms.

The inevitable conclusion is that for current regimes of globalization and sustainable development to be strengthened, or even to survive, they must be re-engineered to generate large-scale finances for poverty alleviation. The passion for globalization has to be tempered by compassion for its victims. Sadly, this thought has not penetrated into the thinking of the developed economies. Their actions also do not reflect the realization that there cannot be a sustainable revival of their own sluggish economies unless the globalization and sustainable development priorities are re-oriented and anchored in the developmental needs of two-thirds of the global population.

A year ago, I suggested in my speech to the United States Congress a comprehensive global dialogue on development. The aim of such a dialogue would be to address the highly unstable situation in which one-third of the world's population lives in luxury and condemns the remaining two-thirds to poverty and want. It is a fertile breeding ground for political unrest, economic chaos and social fractures.

India would be happy to coordinate this dialogue, with the immediate objective of mobilizing resources for poverty alleviation programmes in developing countries. A preliminary agenda for the dialogue could include the accelerated liquidation of external debts of low-income and highly indebted countries; poverty alleviation programmes specifically aimed at developing countries facing financial crises; stabilization of international prices of primary commodity exports; and, most importantly, welfare and development programmes for all the world's needy children — for their nutrition, health, education and protection from degrading and hazardous employment.

The struggle for equitable development and the war against poverty are as important as our campaign against terrorism and our collective search for security. At a time when an external stimulus has motivated us to unite against terrorism and for security, let us summon an equally strong inner resolve for development and poverty alleviation. They are just as crucial for a global order at peace with itself.

This fundamental and seamless linkage between peace, security and development can be recalled in the sage words of the great Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore:

> "From now onward, any nation that takes an isolated view of its own interests will run contrary to the spirit of the New Age, and will know no peace. From now onward, the anxiety that each country has for its own safety must embrace the welfare of the whole world."

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of India for his statement.

Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 (*continued*)

General debate

Address by Mr. Lee Han-dong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Lee Han-dong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Lee Han-dong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Lee Han-dong (Republic of Korea) (*spoke in Korean; English text provided by the delegation*): Before all else, on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Korea, I wish to convey our deepest condolences and sympathy to the bereaved families and friends of those who lost lives in the horrendous terrorist attacks of 11 September. This unprecedented criminal act has posed a grave threat to international peace and security, as well as a serious challenge to human dignity. Such terrorist acts constitute a crime against humanity and civilization that cannot be justified by any cause.

To forestall the recurrence of such incidents and to eradicate international terrorism, comprehensive and common efforts at the international level are urgently needed. The United Nations is expected to play an important role in these efforts. Immediately after the terrorist attacks in September, the Security Council and the General Assembly adopted resolutions denouncing terrorism and calling for measures for its elimination. This prompt action, as well as the ensuing debates at the United Nations, attest to the major role to be played by the Organization in the anti-terrorism effort.

The Government of the Republic of Korea will continue to actively take part in the measures taken by the United Nations, including the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), and will join the effort to free the international community from the scourge of terrorism. At the same time, we will spare no effort in rendering humanitarian assistance to the refugees who have been displaced as a result of the war against terrorism.

Furthermore, in preparing to co-host the 2002 Korea/Japan FIFA World Cup, we will do our utmost to ensure that the event is held in a secure atmosphere free from the threat of terrorism.

I stand here with much reminiscence. The Republic of Korea, once one of the major recipients of United Nations assistance, is now an active contributor to the effort to realize the ideals and goals of this body. It is also the country whose Minister for Foreign Affairs had the honour of presiding over the first session of the General Assembly in the new century.

The birth of the Republic and its development thereafter owe a great deal to United Nations

assistance. Indeed, the Government of the Republic of Korea was born from the United Nations-supervised elections held pursuant to the United Nations resolution calling for an independent Government in Korea. During the Korean war, in the early 1950s, we were able to defend our country, thanks to the participation and noble sacrifice of the United Nations forces.

After the war, as the Korean people strove to overcome the war's devastation, rebuild the country, achieve economic development and emerge a democracy, upholding human rights, we found enormous strength and encouragement in the support and cooperation rendered by the United Nations. The Korean people will never forget this. We will redouble our efforts to do our share for the cause of global peace and prosperity, as enshrined in the Charter.

Looking back on the Republic of Korea's arduous and eventful process of development over the past half century, we see that it is an exemplary case of all the good that can be achieved when the international community works closely with a people determined to overcome poverty and the legacy of conflict in order to build a better future for themselves.

Ten years have passed since the simultaneous admission of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations. In the intervening decade, particularly during recent years, much progress has been made in inter-Korean relations. Taking this opportunity, I would like to briefly touch upon the peace process that is unfolding on the Korean peninsula — an effort for which we seek members' continuing support.

The first inter-Korean summit, held in June 2000, was truly a historic event for peace, not only on the Korean peninsula, but also in East Asia and indeed the world. Before the summit, the Korean peninsula had remained a lone island where the cold war maintained its foothold. The summit initiated the process of melting away that foothold — the icy wall of hostility and confrontation that had thickened between South and North Korea over the past half century. The whole world welcomed the breakthrough, expressing high hopes for peace on the Korean peninsula, as exemplified here by the joint statement of the co-chairpersons of the Millennium Summit and the General Assembly resolution.

Since then positive changes have taken place on the Korean peninsula. There have been three rounds of reunions by members of separated families. At the opening of the Sydney Olympic Games, the world was moved to see South and North Korean athletes march in together. The project to relink a railway and road between the two Koreas is now under way. The first South-North Defence Ministers' meeting was held with a view to reducing tension and furthering peace.

Meanwhile, North Korea has steadily expanded its diplomatic horizon, establishing diplomatic ties with most countries of the European Union and many others. Such endeavours have been strongly welcomed and supported by the Republic of Korea, which has striven to shore up global support for the Korean peace process.

The goal of our sunshine policy of promoting engagement between South and North Korea is for the two sides to live together in peace and cooperation, in preparation for peaceful unification. The engagement policy is actively supported by the whole world, not to mention the Korean people and key neighbours surrounding the Korean peninsula. North Korea, too, embraced the spirit of peace, reconciliation and cooperation Joint Declaration of 15 June 2000 issued at the inter-Korean summit.

The Government of the Republic of Korea will continue to do its utmost so that a lasting peace may take root on the Korean peninsula and global peace may be strengthened. We sincerely thank the United Nations and the leaders of the world for the encouragement they have given us so far. We shall continue to count on their steadfast support and cooperation.

The work required of the United Nations in the twenty-first century is no less than daunting. Numerous tasks lie ahead of us, such as fostering international peace and security, promoting the common prosperity of the global village, advancing democracy and human rights, eradicating poverty, combating transnational crime, protecting the environment and enhancing human well-being.

Rising to these challenges, world leaders gathered last year at the Millennium Summit to reconfirm their responsibilities and to chart a new course for the international community in the twenty-first century. The Millennium Declaration aims at materializing a

new United Nations that can effectively meet the many challenges faced by the international community.

It should be appreciated in particular that the Declaration sets concrete policy goals to free humanity from fear and poverty. Now the task before all States Members of the United Nations is to muster the best of their wisdom and strength in devising and implementing measures to fulfil the commitments outlined in the Millennium Declaration. The Republic of Korea will actively cooperate with all other Members, so that these commitments may be carried out faithfully.

With the end of the cold war and the passing of the twentieth century, reconciliation and cooperation have come to define the tenor of the evolving global order. However, genuine global peace has yet to be obtained. In many corners of the globe, the threat of terrorism looms large, and conflicts and confrontations caused by ethnic, religious and economic factors still persist. Far worse, the greatest victims are often the most vulnerable groups, such as children, women and ethnic minorities. In this regard, I fully support the efforts of the United Nations to strengthen its capability to prevent and resolve conflicts and to deal with their aftermath. The conflict prevention and peacekeeping function of the United Nations is essential for global peace, and the role of the United Nations in post-conflict peace-building should also be expanded.

Humanity in the twenty-first century is at the mercy of rapid and sweeping changes that are unprecedented in the history of human civilization. At the core of the vortex lie the information technology revolution and globalization. If we fail to meet the challenges posed by these trends, the promises of peace and prosperity in the twenty-first century will not be fulfilled. Member States of the United Nations must gather their collective wisdom and will so that all members of the international community can enjoy the benefits of globalization and the revolutionary advances in information and communication technology.

Against this backdrop, President Kim Dae-jung proposed building a trans-Eurasia information network at the Asia-Europe Summit last year, with a view to galvanizing information exchange and cooperation between Asia and Europe to an unprecedented level. In order to narrow the information gap between nations, international assistance is required, particularly in building the information infrastructures and human resources of developing countries. In this regard, greater cooperation and attention on the part of the developed countries are essential.

Furthermore, the effective management of the global economy and poverty eradication in the underdeveloped countries should be placed high on the agenda of global consultations. The visibility and transparency of global financial markets should be enhanced by reinforcing the functions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and other international financial organizations.

The next round of World Trade Organization (WTO) talks should be launched as soon as possible in order to strengthen free trade and the multilateral trading system. In this regard, I hope the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in March of next year, will succeed in devising a comprehensive plan to deal with issues related to poverty and development. We have to bear in mind the lesson drawn from history that fostering the middle-class through poverty eradication can lay a solid foundation for democracy.

As far as the environment is concerned, international efforts to protect "Mother Nature" should be carried out in a more effective and substantial manner.

In some advanced countries, the development of bio-technology has reached such astonishing levels as to arouse fear of infringing upon the realm of God. While acknowledging the positive role such scientific advancements may have in prolonging human life and improving the quality of life, we need to prevent them from being misused and from becoming an affront to human dignity.

Democracy and human rights are universal values that must continue to be sought and upheld in the twenty-first century. In recent decades, democracy and human rights have claimed many victories around the world, but they have also suffered setbacks. Human rights continue to be abused in many parts of the world in the form of kidnapping and torture, illegal executions, discrimination and other violations. It is particularly distressing that large-scale and systematic violations of human rights persist in some regions of conflict. Such deplorable acts cannot be tolerated. I

sincerely hope that the second conference of the Community of Democracies, to be held in Seoul in October of next year, will prove to be a milestone in this regard.

Humanity places great expectations upon the United Nations to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century and to make the most of the opportunities it brings, because this global body provides a unique forum for all the countries of the world together to seek solutions to common problems in the spirit of mutual respect and cooperation. To rise to the task, the United Nations requires ongoing reform. Its financial and organizational foundations must be strengthened in accordance with its expanding roles. In particular, the reform of the Security Council, given its importance to all Member States, must be achieved through general agreement, with a view to making the Council more representative, democratic and efficient.

The United Nations must stand firmly at the centre of efforts to further spread and consolidate multilateralism around the world, based on the spirit of mutual understanding and compromise. Tolerance and dialogue must be upheld in international relations if we are to make the twenty-first century an era of shared prosperity and peaceful coexistence among diverse civilizations.

The Republic of Korea will strive to contribute to the further development of the United Nations in the spirit of repaying the generosity it has received from the international community. Befitting the country's growing capabilities, the Republic of Korea's contribution to the United Nations budget is to increase significantly in the coming years, in accordance with the new scale of assessments adopted la[illegible] year. Next year, it will become the tenth largest contributor to the regular budget of the United Nations. With its troops now taking part in the Organization's peacekeeping missions in East Timor and three other places, the Republic of Korea will also continue to actively participate in the United Nations endeavours for peace and security.

Furthermore, we will share our experiences in economic de[illegible]elopment and democratization with our neighbours in the global village and do what we can to bridge the gap between the developing and developed countries.

I am convinced that the United Nations, on the strength of the concerted efforts of all countries represented here, will continue to be a beacon of hope, lighting the road ahead for humanity in the twenty-first century.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, my own country, for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Lee Han-dong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 (*continued*)

General debate

Mr. Aguirre Martínez (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on His Excellency Mr. Louis Michel, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium.

Mr. Michel (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour today to speak on behalf of the European Union, which wishes, through you, Sir, to congratulate the President on his election. That election testifies to the esteem of the international community for his person and his country. I commend the speed of action and efficiency that you have shown in the face of the tragic events of 11 September, in adapting the agenda for the work of this Assembly.

I would also like to associate with this tribute the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan. Mr. Secretary-General, your re-election had already drawn attention to the unanimous appreciation of the Member States for your exceptional qualities as a manager, politician and humanist. The Nobel Committee paid an even wider tribute by awarding you the Nobel Peace Prize. The United Nations itself, here at your side, was also a recipient of this message of hope from a world in a state of shock, appealing to the United Nations to remain at the centre of the international community's action for peace and development.

It was the fundamental values constituting the foundation of the United Nations that were attacked in so cowardly a manner right here in New York on 11 September, when our host country, several thousands of its citizens and nationals of over 60 countries were the

victims of a barbaric act of aggression for which no justification can be accepted.

That attack, by its enormity, has opened our eyes to the worldwide threat that terrorism has become. It is our open, democratic, tolerant and multicultural societies that were attacked through the United States. The terrorist threat must be hunted down in each of our countries, in our various regional organizations and, at the world level, through the United Nations.

The European Union has most categorically condemned the 11 September attacks, and the fight against terrorism is now, more than ever before, one of our top objectives. The Union has declared its total solidarity with the United States. It has reaffirmed its unreserved support for the military action undertaken in the name of legitimate self-defence, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council resolution 1368 (2001).

On 21 September, an Extraordinary European Council adopted an action plan for an unprecedented campaign against terrorism. This plan contains a number of specific measures intended to enhance judicial and police cooperation, including the introduction of a European arrest warrant. It also includes measures to put an end to the financing of terrorism and to improve air security. The European Council acknowledged that the fight against terrorism requires greater participation by the Union in the efforts of the international community to prevent and stabilize regional conflicts. By developing the Common Foreign and Security Policy and bringing the European Security and Defence Policy into operation as soon as possible, the Union will be at its most effective.

At the global level also, fresh impetus must be provided to the fight against terrorism. Naturally, the United Nations has a central role to play in developing a coordinated and diversified strategy. We warmly welcome the major steps that have already been taken to that end. The most remarkable of these was the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) by the Security Council on 28 September. The European Union and its member States are already committed to rapid enactment of the measures needed for its implementation. We call upon all countries to cooperate actively with the follow-up system set up by the Security Council, and we reiterate our readiness to provide aid in that connection to any countries that may have technical difficulties in meeting the requirements.

It is also essential that all States ratify without delay the 12 conventions on combating terrorism and apply all of their provisions. The International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism is a decisive aspect of international action and needs to be speedily signed and ratified.

Lastly, the European Union welcomes the recent progress made in negotiating a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, on the basis of a draft submitted by India. The remaining difficulties must now be dealt with as soon as possible so that this instrument can be ready for signing early next year.

The efforts we are making to combat terrorism must also form part of overall efforts to build a better world, a world in which human dignity is sacrosanct, in which human rights and fundamental freedoms are fully respected.

The promotion and protection of human rights and an attachment to the principles of democracy and the rule of law are essential components of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy and of its development, cooperation and external relations. The European Union will actively pursue its work on consolidating human rights and fundamental freedoms, with particular insistence on the universal, indivisible and interdependent nature of all human rights. It will continue to support efforts by the Secretary-General to integrate human rights into United Nations activities at all levels and in all forums, and to cooperate with all United Nations human rights machinery.

The European Union welcomes the imminent establishment of the much-awaited International Criminal Court. The Union sees this as being of paramount importance and urges all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Rome Statute as soon as possible. More than ever before, we need a universal and permanent court capable of sanctioning the most serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, thereby contributing to peace and security in the world. It is vital that the United Nations give effective support to the establishment of the Court.

Following the tragedy of 11 September, the special session of the General Assembly on the 10-year

review of the World Summit for Children had to be postponed. However, until it is held, we need to keep up the momentum developed in the preparatory discussions. We must continue to integrate the specific dimension of the child into our actions and strive to ensure that every child's life is free from terror, the horrors of war, abuse and exploitation, hunger and poverty.

The European Union is resolved to continue the fight against all forms of discrimination and violence against women, and to ensure that all countries take strong measures to apply the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Women must be able to enjoy their human rights in full, on an equal footing with men. Girls must have the same opportunities as boys, particularly in education and access to social services. The European Union insists also that there be equal rights to property, credit facilities and social services, including reproductive health services. It is in the interest of everyone that women be able to participate fully in economic and political life at all levels.

The Union stresses the importance of implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the special attention that must be given to the participation and full association of women on an equal footing in all efforts aimed at maintaining and promoting peace and security.

We must also vigorously pursue the crucial fight against racist and discriminatory tendencies and intolerance, which are daily realities throughout the world. The World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance has, I believe, shown us the way forward. It has also enabled us to advance our ways of thinking about the causes and origins of racism and, above all, to view our past in a new way. What matters now is that we find the will to close the darkest chapters of our history so that we can build a new relationship based on mutual respect, solidarity and partnership.

The terrible humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is gripping the attention of the international community just as much as the political, diplomatic, military and economic aspects of the situation in that country. This is the first time that the international community has adopted such a global approach to an armed conflict. We are convinced that this is the best — if not the only — way to ensure effective resolution of the crisis. The coordination of aid efforts, primarily on the ground and as part of the range of actions undertaken by the United Nations, remains essential.

Emergency humanitarian aid to Afghanistan is an absolute priority for the European Union, which has undertaken to mobilize an aid package of over 320 million euros as soon as possible. The Union expresses its concern about the difficulties of access, as well as of delivering humanitarian assistance, in Afghanistan. It supports the efforts of the United Nations specialized agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and all humanitarian organizations in seeking practical and flexible solutions. It also calls on the countries of the region to facilitate, by all possible means, humanitarian operations to deal with new influxes of Afghan refugees.

The European Union recognizes the vital role of the United Nations in the search for a peace plan for Afghanistan. It intends to support the initiatives of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative and to make a constructive contribution, with regard to both the search for an internal political solution and to a plan for rebuilding the country. The Union also stresses the importance of the regional dimension of the stabilization of Afghanistan.

We must make adequate contributions to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs so as to ensure that it can function efficiently. The European Union attaches particular importance to aid to persons displaced within their countries. We therefore welcome the fact that a unit has been established within the Secretariat to cater to their specific needs. Following the recent attacks against humanitarian aid personnel, the European Union can only call once again for the strengthening of arrangements, particularly those of a legal and financial nature, for guaranteeing the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers and United Nations workers in general.

Now more than ever, disarmament and non-proliferation constitute the cornerstone of any peace and security structure, and must therefore be subject to binding multilateral norms. It is against that background that we wish to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, promote the rapid entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and reinforce the biological and toxin weapons Convention. We must also combat the proliferation of ballistic

missiles and the illicit trade in light weapons and continue to work for the complete elimination of anti-personnel mines.

With regard to peacekeeping, the United Nations has shown in the past year that it is better equipped and better organized than it has been in recent times. By way of example, I should like to mention the operations in East Timor, Eritrea and Sierra Leone. Progress has thus already been made on the ground in implementing the recommendations of the Brahimi report. But much remains to be done, and the European Union will continue to provide its active support for improving the capabilities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and advocating that the Organization be given the resources that it needs to enable it effectively to discharge its increasingly complex responsibilities.

A comprehensive and long-term approach is required in order to resolve differences of opinion, consolidate peace and prevent a resurgence of conflict. The European Union, which is currently establishing its own military and civil crisis-management capability, is actively engaged in strengthening its cooperation with the United Nations and other international organizations in the area of conflict prevention, crisis management, humanitarian aid, post-conflict reconstruction and long-term development.

The Balkans, a region so close to the countries of the European Union, remains at the centre of the Union's external activities. We resolutely maintain our commitment to contribute to building a region of security, prosperity and democracy there, where multi-ethnic societies can be free to flourish. Progress has been remarkable and encouraging, but unfortunately in many cases the situation remains fragile. The international community must remain vigilant and must not let extremists, of whatever kind, use violence to destroy the stabilization work already carried out.

The situation in the Middle East is worsening. The lack of any political perspective naturally encourages continued confrontation and plays into the hands of extremists. Defiance, fear and resentment radicalize people's mindsets. The European Union calls on Israelis and Palestinians, while there is still time, immediately to resume the peace process, without preconditions, on the basis of the Mitchell report. It calls on the Israeli authorities to immediately withdraw their forces from Palestinian-administered areas. It calls on the Palestinian Authority to do its utmost to arrest those responsible for violence against Israel.

It is necessary to preserve what has been achieved so far in the peace process: the principles of the Madrid Conference, in particular the principle of land for peace, as well as Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the agreements signed by the parties, which have already led to real results on the ground and to progress on the basis of earlier negotiations. The European Union calls on both parties to do their utmost in the political, security, economic and social areas in order to get back to the negotiating table, without preconditions, with the objective of realizing the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the region, as set out at the Madrid Conference of 1991. For the Palestinians, the establishment of a viable democratic State and an end to the occupation of their territory is essential. The Israelis must have the right to live in peace and security within internationally recognized borders. The European Union also recalls that the search for a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region requires due account to be taken of the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese aspects of the conflict. The same principles should apply in the resolution of those situations.

It is primarily for the parties themselves to try to find peace through negotiating all elements relating to permanent status. This will include finding a viable and just solution to the particularly complex issues of Jerusalem and the refugees, as well as those of the economic support for the Palestinian people.

The European Union, in close cooperation with the United States of America and the other partners involved, reaffirms its willingness to work for a final settlement to the conflict. We believe that it is now a matter of urgency to develop an initiative to strongly urge the parties to resume their political dialogue.

The European Union finds the status quo in Cyprus unacceptable. We express our disappointment at the unjustified decision of the Turkish side to decline the Secretary-General's invitation to pursue talks. We continue to support the Secretary-General's endeavours towards a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Cyprus question in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The scale of the tragedies on the African continent demands resolute action on our part, at all levels, to address the direct structural causes of those

conflicts. Conflicts in Africa have become increasingly complex and their cross-border effects increasingly destructive. The crises in the Great Lakes region of West Africa, in Zimbabwe and in the Horn of Africa require increased vigilance on the part of the Organization. Those crises also show the need for a comprehensive and integrated international approach. We gave an enthusiastic welcome to the launch of the New African Initiative at the Lusaka summit of the Organization of African Unity. The European Union has stated its willingness to respond and has already entered into a dialogue at the highest level with the African Union.

At the Millennium Summit, we pledged together to attain a set of development objectives. That is an ambitious project which involves, inter alia, good governance in each country and at the international level. The Union underlines the need for strengthened partnership between rich countries and poor countries to achieve the development objectives of the Millennium Declaration. That partnership entails obligations and joint but varied efforts on the part of all countries.

First of all, we must make every effort to eradicate poverty. New, concrete commitments were made at the third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, held at Brussels last May. The European Union committed itself to untying aid, to opening up its markets through the "everything but arms" initiative and to the full financing of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative. It is now a question of finalizing the follow-up mechanisms of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. The European Union will also continue to give priority to the development of Africa.

Two major international conferences will give us an opportunity to take up the challenges and achieve the principal objectives of the Millennium Declaration. At the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held next March at Monterrey, Mexico, we shall focus on improving cooperation among all development actors, and on using resources more effectively and better mobilizing them.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg in October 2002, we wish to promote the sustainable use and management and the protection of the natural resources that are the underpinning of economic and social development. We wish also to integrate action on the environment and poverty, to ensure that globalization serves the needs of sustainable development, and to promote better ways of managing public affairs and participation. The European Union would like to explore with its partners the possibility of achieving at the Summit a global pact on sustainable development. Such a pact should contain commitments both from Governments and from other actors. A global pact should lead to concrete action to improve the implementation of sustainable development policies. We hope that United Nations Member States will without delay commit themselves to be represented at Monterrey and at Johannesburg at the highest possible political level.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was one of the major results of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. We welcome the progress made at Bonn and at Marrakesh, and we undertake speedily to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

We have also just reached an intergovernmental consensus at the highest level on the strategy needed to halt the appalling global AIDS pandemic. That was a major step forward, but the urgent and tragic nature of the problem demand greater ambition. We will actively contribute to the creation of the new Global Fund to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and we will play an active role in all the other processes that emerged from last June's special session so that the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS is put into practice through concrete measures.

Among other challenges, the demographic changes that lie ahead are of particular interest to the European Union. The second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held at Madrid in April 2002, will be an opportunity for us to work together to build a society for all ages.

The Millennium Summit enabled us to tackle, at the highest level, the major challenges facing the world community. We must now turn our attention to the process of following up the Declaration adopted by heads of State or Government with all due regard for the lofty and balanced aims of that cardinal text. For that, we need reliable data and depend on the existing follow-up machinery and processes and on the concerted efforts of the various actors in the

international community who can help us to achieve those objectives.

We must also continue reform of the United Nations system as a whole, including the specialized agencies and the operational funds and programmes. The strengthening of the Security Council and its comprehensive reform in all its aspects should be pursued with determination. If we want a Security Council capable of responding even more effectively to the major challenges of the moment, we must intensify our efforts.

Looking beyond the tremendous and growing complexity of our actions at the international level, our debate should highlight this basic truth: if we want to build a world made more peaceful by respect for the law, solidarity and tolerance, we must strengthen our cohesiveness in the face of the new challenges before us, and also step up our efforts to promote human rights, eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

In this forum of the United Nations, we reply to the messengers of destruction with our common ideal, which will be stronger than hatred and division among mankind. That edifice, whose foundations are set in our spirits and in our hearts, will be unassailable.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I call next on His Excellency Mr. Anatoliy M. Zlenko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine): Allow me at the outset to congratulate the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, Mr. Han Seung-soo, on his election to that important and responsible post. On behalf of the Ukrainian delegation, I would like to assure him of our full support and to wish him every success in his work. I take this opportunity also to express our appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri, whose political wisdom and diplomatic skill enabled the Assembly to achieve important results at its fifty-fifth session.

A year ago, at the Millennium Summit, we, the representatives of the nations of the world, were seen as heralds of a new age. At that memorable gathering, the United Nations heard words that gave humanity hope for a new and just model of international relations in the new century: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance and mutual responsibility. Those fundamental values enshrined in the Millennium Declaration outlined the path that the peoples of the world will follow in the new era.

However, while striving to breathe the fresh air of the future, we instead swallowed a mouthful of ashes and dust. On 11 September the modern world was brutally wounded. The death of innocent people shocked all those who cherish the universal values of life and freedom.

The terrorist acts that took place in the United States demonstrated that the philosophy of hatred, which has no religious, ethnic or linguistic affiliation, has become one of the key challenges of the contemporary world. This threat requires an urgent and clear international reaction.

Ukraine shares the pain of the American people and fully supports the resolve of the United States effectively to stand against the perpetrators, patrons and instigators of those terrorist acts.

We joined the global anti-terrorist coalition without any hesitation because we recognize the need to unite the efforts of the international community to counter new threats.

The military campaign in Afghanistan, which targets the core of international terrorism, is the first stage, and a necessary element, of these efforts. It is also evident, however, that the Afghan people, who live in a state of permanent humanitarian crisis, have become hostages to terrorism. As a result, this crisis cannot be brought to an end without consistent political and diplomatic efforts aimed at finding a solution.

Ukraine welcomes the activities of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Lakhdar Brahimi, and supports their constructive contribution to the stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan.

We are convinced that efforts to further strengthen and improve international legal mechanisms for combating terrorism should also be given a powerful political impetus. In this context, the speedy conclusion of work on the draft comprehensive convention on terrorism takes on special importance.

I am also pleased to mention that the proposal of my country to convene a ministerial meeting of the Security Council to discuss further steps in the global response to international terrorism was unanimously supported by the members of the Council. There is no doubt that, in the course of such a meeting, vital steps

will be taken to identify key means and methods of combating terrorism.

We also maintain that there is a need for proper institutional arrangements to coordinate and complement the individual efforts of Member States in combating international terrorism and to ensure that the legal instruments we have elaborated are implemented in the most efficient manner possible. Any entity of this sort should not become just another bureaucratic body, but, rather, should be an effective mechanism for contributing to the consolidation of international efforts in this area.

To honour the memory of the thousands who have perished in terrorist attacks and to further unite our efforts in fighting the scourge of terrorism, I would like to propose, on behalf of the Government of Ukraine, to declare 11 September a United Nations day to combat international terrorism. I hope that this proposal will be supported by the General Assembly, which would then establish this day as a symbol of our remembrance, unity and resolve.

Ukraine welcomes the decision taken this year by the Norwegian Nobel Committee to award the Peace Prize to the United Nations and to its Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. He is exactly the kind of leader the United Nations needs today as it faces new global challenges.

Are we ready to stand up to these new challenges? Have we fully realized that the deterioration of the situation in the world is due to the existing, deep-rooted international inequality? And, finally, how will the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly be remembered — as a session that put an end to the age of illusions, or as a forum that consolidated the United Nations family?

The United Nations is entering a new period of its history. Ukraine is deeply convinced that, from a strategic perspective, the strengthening of the status of the United Nations as the core of the modern system of international relations should become the primary task of this Organization.

The terrorist acts in the United States have united and consolidated the international community. Why has it taken the tragic loss of thousands of innocent lives for it to realize that there is a vital need for unity of action on its part?

We believe that the essence of United Nations leadership lies in ensuring an effective response to the new challenges to security at both the global and regional levels. This role, however, cannot be played effectively if we do not improve the existing model of decision-making and implementation at the international level.

That is why my country actively supports the reform of the Security Council. We see this reform not as a weakening of the foundations of the Council's work, but, on the contrary, as a move that will strengthen them, by ensuring that they better reflect the realities of the modern world.

This year, Ukraine is completing its term as a member of the Security Council. I believe that the experience we have gained will contribute to advancing the process of change. We will consistently advocate the need to improve the Security Council's methods of work and to enlarge its membership. As a Central European nation, Ukraine will actively lobby for an additional seat on the Council for this region.

In our view, special attention should also be paid to the philosophy of United Nations peacekeeping activities and to the problem of sanctions. For many years, Ukraine — which today is among the 10 largest troop contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions — has consistently supported the development of effective United Nations preventive mechanisms.

At the Millennium and Security Council summits last year, the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, emphasized the need for the elaboration of a United Nations strategy for comprehensive conflict prevention based on the wide use of preventive diplomacy.

I am pleased to note that the recommendations on conflict prevention put forward by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his June report echo the proposal made by the President of Ukraine. We believe that the United Nations possesses the necessary experience and resources for the enhancement of its role in this field, in particular through the establishment of regional centres to monitor potential areas of conflict, as well as through the more active use of preventive deployment operations.

Concerning the issue of sanctions, we are in favour of the elaboration of a well-balanced methodology for their imposition, implementation and

lifting. This critical lever of influence should not be turned into a political boomerang.

We are also convinced of the overriding need to further consolidate international efforts towards arms control, disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. On the basis of a realistic assessment of the potential of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we hope that it will result in an increase in the number of parties to this Treaty, which was ratified by Ukraine last year.

I would also like to mention that next month Ukraine will complete the implementation of the third, and last, phase of strategic weapons destruction under the START Treaty. On 30 October, Ukraine destroyed its last intercontinental ballistic missile silo. In that way we turned one of the important pages in the history of nuclear disarmament. We are ready to continue to make our contribution to secure the effectiveness of the system of strategic stability in the world.

Ukraine supports further development by the United Nations of a universal approach to the issues of ensuring sustainable development and eradicating poverty in the world. We hope that the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development will be a practical step in mobilizing national and international resources to solve these problems.

We also intend to take practical steps to resolve a set of environmental protection issues. As a country that still suffers the pain of the Chernobyl tragedy, Ukraine counts on the further active involvement of the United Nations Development Programme and other operational bodies of the Organization in the process of eliminating the long-term consequences of this disaster.

Ukraine considers that cultural and spiritual disasters are no less destructive than natural ones. The cultural mosaic of the world is the most precious and delicate treasure granted to humanity. Ukraine has the honour to be one of the sponsors of the General Assembly draft resolution on the proclamation of the year 2002 as the United Nations year for the protection of the world's cultural heritage, and calls on the international community to support this initiative. Vigorous work to protect humanity's historical and cultural heritage is not only a vital necessity, it is also our moral responsibility to past and future generations.

The year 2001 is an anniversary year for our country. On 24 August Ukraine celebrated the first decade of its independence. These have been 10 years of complex processes. The main result has been Ukraine's consolidation as a peaceful and independent European State. We have achieved sustainable economic growth as a result of consistent reforms, and my country is an active participant in European regional processes.

Ukraine is contributing to the settlement of the so-called frozen conflicts, specifically in Abkhazia, Georgia, and Transdniestria, Moldova. As a member of Group of Friends of the Secretary-General for Georgia, Ukraine is concerned over the slow pace of the Georgia-Abkhaz peace process.

Ukraine takes an active stand concerning the settlement of the situation in the Republic of Macedonia. The resolution of the centuries-old Balkan problem is an ambitious and urgent task for Europe in the new century.

We also note with concern the escalation of tensions in the Middle East during the past year. The entire history of the conflict in the Middle East proves that its vicious circle can be broken only through renouncing violence and reviving mutual trust and tolerance between the sides to the conflict.

The United Nations is beginning a new and complicated period of its activities. It is up to us to determine how the Untied Nations comes out of its encounter with the new challenges, united or divided. I believe that the wisdom of this forum, which has been nurtured through decades of hard and responsible work, should serve to guarantee an optimistic scenario.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.